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The Relation of "Enthusiasm"
To English Literary History:
A Preliminary Study

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THE RELATION OF "ENTHUSIASM" TO ENGLISH LITERARY
HISTORY: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

BY

SADA ANNIS HARBARGER

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THESIS

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Sada Annis Harbarger

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BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF Master of Arts


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1652-This way of communicating truth to the souls of men is origi-
nally nothing else but propheticall or enthusiastical.
Smith, John: Select Discourses.

1656-Enthusiasm is nothing else but a misconceit of being in-
spired. Now to be inspired is to be moved in an extraordi-
nary manner, by the power of Spirit of God to act, speak, or
think what is holy, just and true. From hence it will be
easily understood what enthusiasm is, viz., a full but false
persuasion in a man that he is inspired.

A poet is an enthusiast in jest, and an enthusiast is a poet
in good earnest.

We are speaking now of enthusiastical sanguine.
More, H.: Enthus. Tri.

1660-If ever Christianity be exterminated, it will be by Enthusi-
asme. More, H.: Myst. Godl.

Their proper Enthusiasts is the Sybils and the Pythian Pro-
phetess. Stillingfleet, E.: Iren. I v(1662)96

1665-Hence we may derive the Visions, Voyces, Revelations of the
Enthusiast. Glanvil, J.: Sceps. Sci., XIII.

1669-The Forme wherein the first Divine Poesie was delivered was
Enthusiastic. Gale, Theophilus: Crt. Gentiles,
1 III, 1,12.

1670-When heated melancholy hath kindled the busy and active fan-
cy, the enthusiast then talks of illuminations, new lights,

revelations, and many wonderful fine things that are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Glanvil, J.: Ser. 10.

1674-Nothing made the Anabaptists so infamous as their pretended enthusiasms or revelations.

Hickman, H.: Hist. Quinquart.

1676-The enthusiastic spirit brings reason into disgrace, denying the use thereof in the affairs of faith and religion.

Glanvil, J.: Essays.

1677-The Indians ... will not as yet return any of our Captive Friends, till God speak to the foresaid Enthusiasts. (two Sag-amores claiming divine inspiration)

Squando ... that Enthusiastical or rather Diabolical miscreant.

Hubbard, W.: Nar. II. p.48.

1679- This one enthusiastical conceit of the "Light within".

Puller, T.: Moder. Ch. Eng.

1680-They are neither hot nor enthusiastical but under the power of calm and clear Principles.

Burnet, G.: Rochester.

1681-The enthusiast maid of Hatfield predicted the royal blood should be poisoned.

Luttrell: Brief Rel.

1689-1691-Upon this occasion I shall take the liberty to consider a third ground of assent, which with some men has the same authority, and is as confidently relied on as either faith or reason: I mean enthusiasm, which, laying by reason, would set up revelation without it, whereby in effect it takes away both reason and revelation, and substitutes in the room of them the underground fancies of a man's own brain and assumes them for a foundation both of opinion and conduct. Whatever

groundless opinion comes to settle itself strongly upon their fancies is an illumination from the Spirit of God, and presently of divine authority; and whatsoever odd action they find in themselves a strong inclination to do, that impulse is concluded to be a call or direction from heaven, and must be obeyed; it is a commission from above and they cannot err in executing it.

This I take to be properly enthusiasm.....Though the odd opinions and extravagant actions enthusiasm has run men into were enough to warn them against this wrong principle, so apt to misguide them in their belief and conduct: yet the love of something extraordinary, the ease and glory it is to be inspired, and be above the common and natural ways of knowledge, so flatters many men's laziness, ignorance, and vanity, that when once they have got into this way of immediate revelation, of illumination without search, it is a hard matter to get them out of it.....

The question then here is: How do I know that God is the revealer of this to me; that this impression is made upon my mind by his Holy Spirit; and that therefore I ought to obey it? If I know not this, how great soever the assurance is that I am possessed with, it is groundless; whatever light I pretend to, it is but enthusiasm.

But how shall it be known that any proposition in our minds is a truth infused by God; a truth that is revealed to us by him, which he declares to us, and therefore we ought to believe?

Here it is that enthusiasm fails of the evidence it pretends to.
Locke, J.: Ess. Hum. Under. Part IV. Chap. 19.

1690-Being built upon Foundations wholly enthusiastick and therefore very unaccountable to common Reason.

Temple, : Ess. Heroic Virtue, Works

1691-He(John Oxenbridge) preached very enthusiastically in several places.

Wood, A.: Ath. Oxon,(R)

1692-Some troopes were ordered to suppress and seize upon the ringleaders of these enthusiasticks.

Luttrel,N.: Brief Rel. II.

1692-Poetry, by a kind of enthusiasm or extraordinary emotion of soul, makes it seem to us that we behold those things which the poet paints.

Dryden, J.: Juvenal Pref.

1693-It is my sole enthusiasm.

Urquhart, Rabelais III, Prol.

1695-What I shall add concerning enthusiasm, I guess will very much agree with your thoughts, since yours jump so right with mine about the place where it is to come in; I have designed it for Ch.xviii. lib.iv. as a false principle of reasoning often made use of. But to give an historical account of the various ravings men have embraced for religion, would, I fear, be beside my purpose.

Locke,J.:Letter to Molyneux.

1696-If they should Enthusiastically Believe or Hypocritically Pretend.

The.....enthusiastical Murthers, Rapines and Outrages of the Zealots.

Leslie, C.: Snake in Grass.

1698-1712-Shall I be ashamed of this diviner love and of an object of love so far excelling all those objects in dignity, majesty, grace, beauty, and amiableness? Is this enthusiasm? Be it: and so may I be ever an enthusiast. Happy me, if I can grow on this enthusiasm so as to lose all those enthusiasms of every other kind, and be whole towards this. Shall others

willingly be accounted enthusiastic, and even affect this sort of passion as virtuosos, men of wit, pleasure, politeness, each in their several ways and for their several objects(a song, a picture, a pile of stones, a human body, a shape, a face), and shalt thou be concerned at being found enthusiastic upon another subject so far excelling in itself and which is original to all the rest....

...Is this beatific vision enthusiasm? Or suppose it enthusiasm, is it not justifiable and of a right kind.....Is there a rational and admired enthusiasm that belongs to architecture, painting, music, and not to this?.....Remember the Pantheon, the wonderful fabric of St. Peter's, and,(at once) the architecture of Michael Angelo, the sculpture and paintings of the masters and the voices of the eunuchs with the symphonies. Does this raise an ecstasy and enthusiasm?.....Are there senses by which all those other graces and perfections are perceived, and is there no sense or faculty by which to comprehend or feel this other perfection and grace, so as to bring that enthusiasm hither and transfer it from those objects to these and to the one original and comprehensive subject?

Shaftesbury: Char. II. Ed. Robertson,
London, 1900.

1697-The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store
Enlarged the former narrow bounds.

Dryden, J.: Alexander's Feast.

1701-2-I took the opportunity to break the conversation and called for some glasses of good strong wine, which I fancied might not relish ill with the spiritual woman, but which I am sure was necessary as a cordial for my own stomach after such a discourse and such a mass of villainous imposture and enthusiastic cant.

But as if I was born to suffer this day the last extremity and to

expire under all the torments of this kind, my wine, which had a little revived me, unhappily revived them too, and by what I perceived had raised the enthusiastic spirit to a greater degree than before. (1).

I thought with myself, I was become already in a proper sense, having philosophy enough courageously to endure this assault of the most raging enthusiasm that ever yet broke out into the world, and this too in the persons of some who were my near friends, but whom it would be madness and equal enthusiasm in me to think of ever reclaiming. (2).

We both of us joined in blessing that good Providence which had by reason and education separated us from the impure and horrid superstitions, monstrous enthusiasms, and wild fanaticisms of those blasphemous visionaries we saw abounding in the world, and which had given us on the contrary such established rites of worship as were so decent, chaste, innocent, pure; and had placed us in a Religion and Church where, in respect of the moderate party and far greater part, the principle of charity was really more extensive than in any Christian or Protestant Church besides the world: where zeal was not frenzy and enthusiasm. (3)

I have performed my promise to you, and have, methinks, in this account, raised a sad monument before my eyes of the burning fury and rage, the dreadful ravage and destruction of that greatest incendiary of the earth--Enthusiasm, which is not only able as we see to destroy private persons and whole families, but which, getting head and rising at first from small beginnings, has so reduced even to ashes and desert even the most flourishing cities and

(1),(2),(3) Shaftes. Char.: Ed. Hatch, Lond. 1870--p.388 et seq.

countries, overthrown established churches, violated the most lawful Rites, reversed all that is sacred, profaned religion with blood and cruelties, and in a word, confounded all things divine and human.(1)

1696-Whosoever pleases to look into the fountains of enthusiasm, from whence, in all ages, have eternally proceeded such flattering streams, will find the spring-head to have been as troubled and muddy as the current.(2)

1707-Those confusions, occasioned by such vile enthusions(sic)

who had already robbed the throne.

Ward, E. Hud. Rediv. (1715) II viii.

Enthuiasticks flocked in shoales,

To fight, not for their lives, but souls.

Ibid. II ix.

1707-The Spirit of enthusiasm puts out the eye of reason and destroys the sobriety of religion; leaves a man no principle or rule but that of imagination and impulses; can make him believe that he is in the exaltation of charity, while he is in the very gall of bitterness, and delighting himself in the sin of Ham.....He imitates nothing in the apostles but their miracles! turns religion into romance and will do nothing ordinary.

Cassandra No. II.

You must certainly have observed our poets under a remarkable constraint, when obliged to assume this character; (invocation of the home muse) and you have wondered perhaps why that air of enthusiasm which sits so gracefully with an ancient, should be so spiritless and awkward in a modern.(3)

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Hatch, Lond. 1870- pp.393-394.

(2) Swift's Works, Ed. T.Scott I. p.117-A Tale of a Tub, Sec.IX.

(3) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Hatch, Lond. 1870- Sec. I.-p.5

1707-There is a melancholy which accompanies all enthusiasm. Be it love or religion(for there are enthusiasms in both)nothing can put a stop to the growing mischief of either till the melancholy be removed, and the mind at liberty to hear what can be said against the ridiculousness of an extreme in either way.(1)

The story(of Pan and Bacchus)indeed gives a good hint of the nature of this passion, which can hardly be without some mixture of enthusiasm and horrors of a superstitious kind.(2)

It is necessary a people should have a public leading in religion. For, to deny the magistrate a worship or take away a National Church, is a mere enthusiasm as the notion which sets up persecution.....But to prescribe bounds to fancy and speculation, to regulate men's apprehensions, and religious beliefs or fears, to suppress by violence the natural passion of enthusiasm, or to endeavor to ascertain it or reduce it to one species, or bring it under any modification, is in truth no better sense, nor deserves a better character, than what the comedian declares of the like project in the affairs of love

Nihilo plus agas

Quam si des operam, ut cum ratione insanias.(3)

They are certainly as ill physicians in the body politic, who need to be tampering with these mental eruptions and, under the specious pretence of healing the itch of superstition, and saving souls from the contagion of enthusiasm, should set all nature in an uproar, and turn a few innocent carbuncles into an inflammation and mortal gangrene.(4)

Religion is also a panic, when enthusiasm of any kind gets up,

as oft, on melancholy occasion it will, for vapours naturally rise, and in bad times especially, when the spirits of men are low, as either in public calamities, or during the unwholesomeness of air or diet, or when convulsions happen in nature, storms, earthquakes or other amazing prodigies; at this season the panic must needs run high, and the magistrate of necessity give way to it. (1)

Not only the visionaries and enthusiasts of all kinds were tolerated by the ancients, but, on the other side, philosophy had as free a course, and was permitted as a balance against superstition and enthusiasm of the times, the Epicurean, the Academic, and others were allowed to use all the force of wit and raillery against it.....Thus superstition and enthusiasm were mildly treated, and being let alone, they never rose to that degree as to occasion bloodshed, wars, persecutions, and devastations in the world. (2)

People who can endure no middle temper, but are all air and humour, know little of the doubts and scruples of Religion, and are safe from any immediate influence of devout melancholy or enthusiasm which requires more deliberation and thoughtful practice to fix itself in a temper and grow habitual. (3)

Good humour is not only the best security against enthusiasm but the best foundation of piety and true Religion. (4)

And as good Protestants.....we would consider him as little better than a rank enthusiast who, out of hatred to the Romish idolatry, should, in time of High Mass (where Mass, perhaps, was by law established), interrupt the Priest with clamours or fall foul on his images and relics. (5)

Many of our first Reformers, it is feared, were little better than enthusiasts, and God knows whether a warmth of this kind did not considerably help us in throwing off that spiritual tyranny...
...Whilst Barthlemy Fair is in possession of this privilege (puppet shows) I dare stand security to our National Church, that no sect of enthusiasts, no new venders of prophecy or miracles, shall ever get the start, or put her to the trouble of trying her strength with them, in any case. (1)

There is a sort of enthusiasm of second-hand. And when men find no original commotions in themselves, no prepossessing panic which bewitches them, they are apt still by the testimony of others, to be imposed on and led credulously into the belief of many false miracles and this habit may make them variable and of a very inconstant faith, easy to be carried away with every wind of doctrine, and addicted to every upstart sect or superstition. But the knowledge of our passions in this very seed, the measuring well the growth and progress of enthusiasm, and the judging rightly of its natural force, and what command it has over our very senses, may teach us to oppose more successfully those delusions which come armed with the specious pretexts of moral certainty, and matter of fact. (2)

A gentleman who has writ lately in defense of revived prophecy, and has since fallen himself into the prophetic ecstacies, tells, "That the ancient prophets had the Spirit of God upon them under ecstasy, with divers strange gestures of body denominating them madmen (enthusiasts) as appears evidently (says he) in the instances of Balaam, Saul, David, Ezekiel, Daniel, etc. (3)

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Hatch, Lond. 1870- I. p. 35

(2), (3) Ibid. pp. 55 and 58 respectively.

So necessary it is to give way to this distemper of enthusiasm that even that philosopher (Epicurus) who bent the whole force of his philosophy against superstition, appears to have left room for visionary fancy and to have indirectly tolerated enthusiasm. (1)

Enthusiasm; is wonderfully powerful and extensive; it is a matter of nice judgment, and the hardest thing in the world to know fully and distinctly, since even atheism is not exempt from it, for as some have well remarked, there have been enthusiastical atheists. Nor can divine inspiration by its outward marks, be easily distinguished from it. For inspiration is a real feeling of the divine presence, and enthusiasm, a false one. But the passion they raise is much alike..... (2)

Something there will be of extravagance and fury, when the ideas or images received are too big for the narrow human vessel to contain. So that inspiration may be justly called divine enthusiasm; for the word itself signifies divine presence, and was made use of by the philosopher whom the earliest Christian fathers called divine, to express whatever was sublime in human passions. This was the spirit he allotted to heroes, statesmen, poets, orators, musicians, and even philosophers themselves. Nor can we of our own accord, forbear ascribing to a noble enthusiasm whatever is greatly performed by any of these..... (3) For to judge the spirit whether they are of God, we must antecedently judge our own spirit, whether it be of reason and sound sense; whether it be fit to judge at all by being sedate, cool and impartial, free of every biasing passion, every giddy vapour or mel-

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Hatch, Lond. 1870- I. p.61

(2) Ibid. p.67

(3) Ibid. p.68

ancholy fume. This is the first knowledge and previous judgment, "To understand ourselves and know what spirit we are of". Afterward we may judge the spirit in others, consider what this personal merit is, and prove the validity of their testimony by the solidity of their brain. By this means we may prepare ourselves with some antidote against enthusiasm.⁽¹⁾

1708-June-This month will be distinguished at home by the utter dispersing of those ridiculous enthusiasts commonly called the Prophets.

Swift's Works, Ed.T.Scott I.p.306

1709-For though I was like to be perfectly cured of my skepticism⁽²⁾ 'twas by what I thought worse, downright enthusiasm.
You never knew a more agreeable enthusiast!

Were he my friend, said you, I should hardly treat him in so free a manner; nor should I, perhaps, judge that to be enthusiasm which you so freely term so..... Nor can I be satisfied till I hear further of that serious conversation for which you tax him as enthusiastic.

I must confess, said I, he had nothing of that savage air, of the vulgar enthusiastic kind⁽³⁾..... I who never cared to engage in other love of the least countenance, was the more afraid. I told you of this which had such a power with my poor friend as to make him appear the perfectest enthusiast in the world, ill humour only excepted. For this was singular in him, "That though he had all of the enthusiast he had nothing of the bigot".

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed.Hatch, Lond.1870- I p.70

(2) " " " Robertson"II.1900 Part I Sec.III p.24

(3) Ibid p.25

For I appeal to you, Philocles, whether there be anything in divinity which you think has more the air of enthusiasm than that notion of divine love such as separates from everything worldly, sensual or meanly interested. (1)

According therefore to his hypothesis he would in the first place by way of prevention, declare to you that though the disinterested love of God were the most excellent principle, yet he knew very well that by the indiscreet zeal of some devout, well-meaning people, it had been stretched too far, perhaps even to extravagance and enthusiasm;.....on the other hand that there were those ^{who} in opposition to this devout mystic way, and as professed enemies to what they call enthusiasm, had so far exploded everything of this ecstatic kind as in a manner to have given up devotion, and in reality had left so little of zeal, affection or warmth, in what they call their rational religion, as to make them much suspected of their sincerity in any. For though it be natural enough (he would tell you) for a mere political writer to ground his great argument for religion on the necessity of such a belief as that of a future reward and punishment, yet if you will take his opinion, 'tis a very ill token of sincerity in religion, and in the Christian religion more especially to reduce it to such a philosophy as will allow no room to that other principle of love; but treats all of that kind as enthusiasm for so much as aiming at what is called disinterestedness, or teaching the love of God, or virtue for God or virtue's sake.

"But lest I should appear at last too like an enthusiast, I choose to express my sense, and conclude this philosophical sermon in the words of one of those ancient philologists, whom you

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Robertson, Lond. 1900-Part II Sec. 3, pp. 54-55

are used to esteem".(1)

But this was not a face of religion I was like to be enamoured with. It was not from hence I feared being made enthusiastic or superstitious.(2)

Therefore, now, said I, good Theocles, be once again the enthusiast, and let me hear anew that divine song with which I was lately charmed.(3)

His vein was a plentiful one and his enthusiasm in no likelihood of failing him. His subject, too, as well as his numbers would bear him out. And with the advantage of the rural scene around us, his numbered prose I thought supplied the room of the best pastoral song.(4)

However, said I, all those who are deep in this romantic way (having the passion for things of a natural kind, where neither art nor the conceit or caprice of man has spoiled their genuine order by breaking in upon that primitive state) are looked upon you know, as a people either plainly out of their wits, or overrun with melancholy and enthusiasm.(5)

If there be any seeming extravagance in the case I must comfort myself the best I can, and consider that all sound love and admiration is enthusiasm.(6) "The transports of poets, the sublime of orators, the rapture of musicians, the high strains of the virtuosi--all mere enthusiasm! Even learning itself, the love

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Robertson [Lond. 1900 Part II Sec. IV p. 69.

(2) Ibid Part II Sec V p. 85

(3) " Part III Sec I p. 106

(4) " " " " I p. 115

(5) " " " " II p. 125

(6) " " " " II p. 129

of arts and curiosities, the spirit of travellers and adventurers, gallantry, war, heroism---all, all enthusiasm!" 'Tis enough, I am content to be this new enthusiast in a way unknown to me before.

And I, replied Theocles, am content that you should call this love of ours enthusiasm, allowing it the privilege of its fellow passions! For is there a fair and plausible enthusiasm, a reasonable ecstasy and transport allowed to other subjects, such as architecture, painting, music; and shall it be exploded here?⁽¹⁾...

Thus all the enthusiasms of other kinds resolve themselves into ours. The fashionable kinds borrow from us, and are nothing without us. We have undoubtedly the honour or being originals.⁽²⁾

1710-But is this plant has found a root, in the fields of empire and of knowledge, it has fixed deeper and spread yet farther, upon holy ground. Wherein, though it has passed under the general name of enthusiasm, and perhaps arisen from the same original, yet has it produced certain branches of a very different nature, however often mistaken for each other. The word in its universal acceptation, may be defined, a lifting up of the soul, or its faculties, above matter. This description will hold good in general, but I am only to understand it as applied to religion; wherein there are three general ways of ejaculating the soul, or transporting it beyond the sphere of matter. The first is the immediate act of God, and is called prophecy or inspiration. The second is the immediate act of the Devil, and is termed possession. The third is the product of natural causes, the effect

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Robertson Lond. 1900 Part III Sec. II p. 133

(2) Ibid II The Moralists.

of strong imagination, spleen, violent anger, fear, grief, pain, and the like. These three have been abundantly treated on by authors, and therefore shall not enter my enquiry. But the fourth of religious enthusiasm, or launching out of the soul, as it is purely an effect of artifice and mechanick operation, has been sparingly handled..... I have said that there is one branch of religious enthusiasm which is purely an effect of nature; whereas the part I mean to handle is wholly an effect of art, which, however, is inclined to work upon certain natures and constitutions more than others. Besides there is many an operation which, in its original, was purely an artifice, but through a long succession of ages has grown to be natural.⁽¹⁾

Allowing all I have said to be true, it may still be justly objected that there is in the commonwealth of artificial enthusiasm, some real foundation for art to work upon the temper and complexion of individuals, which other mortals seem to want.

I do not remember any other temper of body, or quality of mind, wherein all nations and ages of the world have so unanimously agreed, as that of a fanatic strain, or tincture of enthusiasm; which improved by certain persons or societies of men, and by them practised upon the rest, has been able to produce revolutions of the greatest figure in history.....Farther, it has possessed as great a power in the kingdom of knowledge, where it is hard to assign one art or science which has not annexed it to some fanatic branch: Such are 'The Philosopher's Stone', 'The Grand Elixir', 'The Planetary Worlds', 'The Squaring of the Circle', 'The Summum Bonum', 'Utopian Commonwealth',.....which all serve for nothingelse, but to employ or amuse this grain of enthusiasm

(1) Swift's Works, Ed. T.Scott, Lond.1905-p.194-195.

dealt into every composition.⁽¹⁾

1711-For my own part, I cannot but at this present apprehend a kind of enchantment or magic in that which we call enthusiasm.⁽²⁾
I have heard indeed that the very reading of treatises and accounts of melancholy has been apt to generate that passion in the overdiligent and attentive reader. And this, perhaps, may have been the reason why our author⁽³⁾himself(as he seems to intimate towards the conclusion of his first letter) cared not in reality to grapple closely with his subject, or give us at once the precise definition of enthusiasm. This, however, we may with our author, presume to infer from the coolest of all studies, even from criticism, itself--"that there is a power in numbers, harmony, proportion, and beauty of every kind, which naturally captivates the heart, and raises the imagination to an opinion or conceit of something majestic and divine".

Whatever the subject may be in itself, we cannot help being transported with the thought of it. It inspires us with something more than ordinary, and raises us above ourselves. Without this imagination or conceit, the world would be but a dull circumstance, and life a sorry pastime.⁽⁴⁾.....I know not, in reality, what we should do to find a reasoning to most of our pleasures in life, were it not for the taste or relish which is owing to this particular passion and the conceit or imagination

(1)Swift's Works, Ed.T.Scott, Lond.1905-p.205.

(2)Shaftes. Enthusiasm p.173-174

(3) Ibid

(4) Ibid p.175

which supports it. Without this we could not so much as admire a poem or ^apicture; a garden or a palace; a charming shape or a fair face. Love itself would appear the lowest thing in nature when thus anticipated and treated according to the anti-enthusiastic method.

When in behalf of enthusiasm he (Shaftesbury) quotes its formal enemies,⁽¹⁾ and shows that they are as capable of it as its greatest confessors^{and asserters.} So far is he from degrading enthusiasm or disclaiming it in himself, that he looks on this passion, simply considered, as the most natural, and its object as the justest in the world. Even virtue itself he takes to be no other than a noble enthusiasm justly directed and regulated by that high standard which he supposes in the nature of things.

He who yields his life a sacrifice to his prince or country; the lover who for his paramour performs as much; the heroic, the amorous, the religious martyrs, who draw their views, whether visionary or real, from this pattern and exemplar of divinity: all these according to our author's sentiments are alike actuated by this passion, and prove themselves in effect so many different enthusiasts⁽²⁾.....

Now if the subject itself be not in nature, neither the idea nor the passion grounded on it can be properly esteemed natural; and thus all admiration ceases and enthusiasm is at an end. But if there be naturally such a passion, 'tis evident that religion itself is of the kind, and must be therefore natural to man.Tis easy to give that turn to the affection, and represent all enthusiasm and religious ecstasy as the product or mere effect

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Robertson, Lond. 1900- II Miscellany II p.176

(2) Ibid p.177

of fear.....

But the original passion, as appears plainly, is of another kind. Enthusiasm is in itself a very honest passion,⁽¹⁾ and has properly nothing for its object, but what is good and honest.....
.....By modern example we know perhaps yet better than by ancient, that in religion the enthusiasm which works by love is subject to many strange irregularities, and that which works by fear to many monstrous and horrible superstitions.

When the passion turns more towards the astonishing and frightful than the amiable and delightful side, it creates rather what we call superstition than enthusiasm.

The common heathen religion, especially in its latter age, when adorned with the beautiful temples and rendered more illustrious by the munificence of the Roman senate and succeeding emperors, ran wholly into pomp, and was supported chiefly by that sort of enthusiasm which is raised from the external objects of grandeur, majesty and what we call august.

We may hear an excellent and learned divine (Dr.Cudworth) of highest authority at home and fame abroad, who after having described an enthusiastical atheist and one atheistically inspired, says of this very sort of men "that they are fanatics too, however that word seem to have a more peculiar respect to something of a deity; all atheists being that blind Goddess Nature's fanatics."⁽²⁾

What the power of ecstasy is, whether through melancholy, wine, love, or other natural causes, another learned divine (Dr.More) of our church, in a discourse upon enthusiasm, sets forth bringing an

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Robertson, Lond. 1900 II Miscellany II p.179

(2) Ibid p.196

example from Aristotle "of a Syracusean poet who never versified so well as when he was in his distracted fits". But as to poets in general, compared with the religious enthusiasts, he says, there is this difference, "that a poet is an enthusiast in jest, and an enthusiast is a poet in good earnest." (1)

The learned doctor, with much pains afterwards, and by help (2) of the peripatetic philosophy, explains this enthusiastical inebriation, and shows in particular "how the vapours and fumes of melancholy partake of the nature of wine".

Besides what he says of the enthusiastic power of fancy in atheists, he calls melancholy a pertinacious and religious complexion, and asserts "that there is not any true spiritual grace from God, but this mere natural constitution, according to the several tempers and workings of it, will not only resemble, but sometimes seem to outstrip," And after speaking of prophetic enthusiasm, and establishing.....a legitimate and a bastard sort, he asserts and justifies the devotional enthusiasm.....of holy and sincere souls, and ascribes this also to melancholy.

'Twas a good fortune in my Lord Bacon's case that he should have escaped being called an atheist or a sceptic, when speaking in a solemn manner of the religious passion, the ground of the superstition or enthusiasm (which he also terms a panic) he derives it from an imperfection in the creation, make or natural construction of man. (3)

Thus a sort of philosophical enthusiasm overspread the world (4)

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Robertson, Lond. 1900- II Miscellany II p.197

(2) Ibid p.198

(3) Ibid p.199

(4) Ibid p.207

.....So that the enthusiasm or zeal, which was usually shown by mankind in behalf of their particular worships, and for which the most part had been hitherto defensive only, grew now to be universally of the offensive kind.....

'Tis observable from Holy Writ that the ancient Ephesian worshippers, however zealous or enthusiastic they appeared, had only a defensive kind of zeal in behalf of their temple.⁽¹⁾.....

The enthusiasm was got up and a panic fear for the church had struck the multitude..It must be confessed that there was besides these motives a secret spring which forwarded this enthusiasm. For certain parties concerned, men of craft, and strictly united in interest, had been secretly called together.

They (the Roman Christian and once Catholic church and their converted emperors) considered wisely the various superstitions and enthusiasms of mankind and proved the different kinds and force of each.⁽²⁾.....They saw that there was nothing more different than that enthusiasm which ran upon spirituals, according to the simpler views of the divine existence, and that which ran upon the external proportions, magnificence of structures, ceremonies, processions, choirs, and those other harmonies which captivate the eye and ear.....The truth is, 'tis but a vulgar species of enthusiasm which is moved chiefly by show and ceremony and wrought upon by chalices and candles, robes and figured dances. Yet this, we may believe, was looked upon as no slight ingredient of devotion in those days.⁽³⁾.....They are indeed so far from being jealous of mere enthusiasm or the ecstatic

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Robertson, Lond. 1900- II Miscellany II p.208.-

(2) Ibid pp.212-213.

(3) Ibid p.214.

manner of devotion, that they allow their mystics to write and preach in the most rapturous and seraphic strains. They suffer them in a manner to supersede all external worship and triumph over outward forms, till the refined religionists proceed so far as either expressly or seemingly to dissuade the practice of the vulgar and established ceremonial duties. And then, indeed, they check the supposed exorbitant enthusiasm, which would prove dangerous to their hierarchal state. (1)

The first monarch of this nation(Jewish)though of a melancholy complexion, joined music with his spiritual exercises, and even used it as a remedy under that dark enthusiasm or evil spirit, which how far it might resemble that of prophecy experienced by him, even after his apostasy, our author pretends not to determine. (2)

It(Inquiry concerning virtue)was long clearing itself from the affected dress of sophists, or enthusiastic air of poets, and appealed late in its genuine, simple and just beauty. (3)

It may be alleged perhaps,"that there are however certain authors in the world, who, though of themselves they neither boldly claim the privilege of divine inspiration nor carry indeed the least resemblance of perfection in their style or composition, yet they subdue the reader, gain the ascendant over his thought and judgment, and force from him a certain implicit veneration and esteem". To this I can only answer,"that if there be neither spell nor enchantment in this case, this can plainly be no other than mere enthusiasm"; except perhaps where the supreme powers have given their sanction to any religious record or pious writ. (4)

..... Even the philosophers who criticised

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Robertson, Lond. 1900- II Miscellany II p. 298

(2) Ibid. II Miscellany III ch. i. p. 238. (3) Ibid. Vch. iii, p. 298

(4) Ibid. Miscellany V ch. iii, p. 299

them(sacred writings)with most severity were not their least admirers, when they ascribed them to that divine inspiration or sublime enthusiasm,

It belongs to mere enthusiasts and fanatics to plead the sufficiency of a reiterate translated text, derived to them through so many channels, and subjected to so many variations of which they are wholly ignorant.

Happily the zeal of this kind(destruction of all footsteps of heathen literature in sacred writings) is now left as proper only to those despised and ignorant enthusiasts.⁽¹⁾

It(The Moralists) attempts to unite the several personages and characters in one action or story,⁽²⁾ within a determinate compass of time, regularly divided and drawn into different and proportioned scenes; and this, too, with variety of styles; the simple, comic, rhetorical, and even the poetic or sublime, such as is the aptest to run into enthusiasm and extravagance.

Above all other enslaving vices and restrainers of reason and just thought, the most evidently ruinous and fatal to the understanding is that of superstition, bigotry and vulgar enthusiasm.

1711-The two great errors into which a mistaken Devotion may betray us, are Enthusiasm and Superstition.

There is not a more melancholy object than a man who has his head turned with religious Enthusiasm.

Devotion, when it does not lie under the check of Reason, is very apt to degenerate into Enthusiasm. When the mind finds itself very much inflamed with her devotions, she is too much inflamed to think that they are not of her own kindling, but blown up by something Divine within her.

(1) Shaftes. Char. Ed. Robertson, Lond. 1900-Miscellany V ch.i p.304

(2) Ibid ch.2, p.333.

As Enthusiasm is a kind of Excess in Devotion, Superstition is the Excess not only of Devotion, but of Religion in general.

An Enthusiast in Religion is like an obstinate clown, a Superstitious Man like an insipid courtier.

Enthusiasm has something it in of Madness, Superstition of Folly. Most of the sects that fall short of the Church of England, have in them strong tinctures of Enthusiasm, as the Roman Catholic ^{Religion} is one huge overgrown Body of childish and idle Superstition.

Nothing is so glorious in the Eyes of Mankind, and ornamental to Human Nature, setting aside the infinite advantages which arise from it, as a strong steady masculine Piety; but Enthusiasm and Superstition are the weaknesses of Human Reason that expose us to the scorn and Derision of Infidels, and sink us even below the beasts that perish.

The Spectator- No. 201.

1715-Chapman seems to have been of an arrogant turn, and an enthusiast in poetry.

Pope, Preface to the Iliad.

1716-The King of Sweden.....must have more enthusiasm in him to put it in execution.

Kennett in Ellis Orig Lett.II.

1718-He(the enthusiast)imitates nothing of the Apostles but their Miracles, turns Religion into Romance, and will do nothing ordinary.

Entertainer No. 18.

1718-The person, who surveys Religion with this unbiased Temper of Mind, will find it to be as distant from the madness of the

enthusiast, and the Folly of the Superstitious Man, as it is from the most extravagant infidelity of the Atheist. ⁽¹⁾

He(the Atheist) finds that which he mistakes for Religion to be monstrous, absurd, destructive of Mankind, and even impossible; and thence he concludes that Religion(which bears a wrong Sound in his Ear)is so too. This is great prejudice; but such as, I hope, is pardonable; and easier, much easier, to be removed, than the former, or than the Blindness of Superstition and Enthusiasm. ⁽²⁾

And therefore as Superstition and Enthusiasm are in themselves not only owing to very stupid Prejudices, but are likewise chargeable with being the cause of the kind of Atheism, last mentioned; they are, I am afraid, the greater evil of the Two.

Enthusiasm is a kind of an overweening, and groundless Persuasion of being the particular Favourite of Heaven; of being inspired from thence with every wild Fancy, that happens to spring up in a warm and distempered Brain; for no other Reason but because he imagines so, and feels a rapturous Pleasure in the Conceit of it. ⁽³⁾ To one possessed with this notion, every Crime becomes lawful, and every Design, that turns up in his Head, is a divine Impulse. He robs, he murders, he overturns the World, if he can; and all is right, all is approved of God; and the blackest crimes are glorious. ⁽⁴⁾ A Devil is a Saint, and a Fury and Angle of Light. The Prejudice that blinds him, is gross Ignorance of the Nature of God, and an unmeasured opinion of his own Excellency. He thinks God capable of commanding

(1)The Free Thinker- No. 22 p.100

(2) Ibid p.101

(3) Ibid p.102

(4) Ibid pp.102 and 103.

anything; and himself of performing everything. He fancies God may turn Vertue into Vice, and Vice into Vertue; make Truth Falsehood, and Falsehood Truth; and reconcile all Contradictions. He knows nothing of the inimitable Reason of things; and the certain Rectitude of the Almighty's will, according to which all his actions are determined. The Enthusiast dreams of nothing but Gifts, and Commissions from Heaven. He imagines himself far above the rest of Mankind; worthy of every Privilege from on high; and alone fit to be the great Instrument of Providence upon all Occasions. If he raises Disturbances in the State, he is sent to convert the World by the Sword. If he exercises his power in Cruelty, he is the Scourge of God. If his Brain happens to be filled with such vast Schemes, he is satisfied with sitting still and contemning his Fellow-Creatures; as being far below him in their Religious Progress. (He alone converses with Heaven; he sees God; he is a Prophet; he feels the Divine Spirit within him; and if he does no Mischief; he does no manner of Good in the World. It is enough that he loves God, and finds a kind of sensual Pleasure in musing upon his existence. By this he fancies to himself that he gains a high degree in his Favour, though he obeys not one of his Commandments; though he acts with no Concern for his Honour, nor for the Good of his Creatures. Thus his Vanity and his Ignorance unite to make him arrogant in the Contempt of Truth and Reason.

Superstition is very different in its Complexion from Enthusiasm; as it has more of Folly in it, than madness though they are frequently found to thrive together.⁽¹⁾.....The effect of

(1) The Free Thinker No. 22 p.104.

this(Superstition)is, Men soon grow to imitate the Impertinencies or Crimes, which they first make their Duties guilty of. But if Superstition happens to meet with Enthusiasm(which we often see) the effects are yet more terrible. Then the Rage and Fury of the one joins to support the Folly of the other.

The truly religious Man is the most rational, the most generous, the best-natured Creature living; happy within himself, and Happiness to others about him; he is free from the perpetual Anxieties of the Superstitious, the wild Perturbations of the Enthusiast, and the comfortless Prospects of the Atheist.

The Free Thinker- No.22, p.105.

1718-The Lover very well knows the object of his Desire; whereas the Enthusiast rises into Extasy, and Admiration, he knows not wherefore, and is smitten with he knows not what.

Ibid. p.73.

As Enthusiasm therefore is a kind of irregular, ^{almost} and/unaccountable Madness, it is not always easy to fix precisely upon its Causes, in the different Persons its effects. In some men it may have no other causes, but that which produces every other sort of madness.

This cause(Ignorance) operating two Ways, is the chief Author of Enthusiasm; as it prevents us from having just Ideas concerning the Nature and Attributes of God; and as it furnishes us with false Notions, and vain Conceits of ourselves, as to our own Merit and Capacity, From one or both of these gross Errours, I believe it will appear, Enthusiasm not only arises generally; but, is preserved in a mind, predisposed for the Delusion by a natural Heat of Brain, and a presumptuous Temper.(1).

(1) The Free Thinker No.22, p.74

When a heated Imagination concurs with a profound Ignorance of the Nature of God, it immediately erects every Production of its own into the Divine Inspiration. A Person thus justified never enquires, whether his warm conceptions be right or wrong; nor coolly examines whether he has any reason to believe his Instigation came from God.⁽¹⁾ He takes his own blind and firm Persuasion to be an incontestable Proof; and believing every Inward Call to be the Voice of Heaven, for no better reason, than because he believes so; he proceeds to Action, without demurring upon the Justice and the Merits of the Cause.

This Enthusiastical Confidence or Inadvertency betrays him into two very great Errors, which his Ignorance hinders him from discerning.

The one consists in imagining that God can command things, which in themselves are not right.....The other great Error, in this case, consists in receiving anything for Divine Inspiration without sufficient Evidence.

Not being acquainted with the Wisdom and Goodness of God, which always inclines him to what is wisest and best, the enthusiast fancies he can command anything; And instead of judging, that whatever God commands, he commands it because it is Wise and Good, he judges everything to be Wise and Good, because he imagines it to be commanded.

In order to produce Enthusiasm in any degree of Vigour, this Ignorance with relation to God, must be accompany'd with an equal Ignorance, and false conceit of ourselves.⁽²⁾ This last kind

(1) The Free Thinker, No. 22, p.75

(2) Ibid p.76

of Ignorance exposes the Enthusiast to the Effects of the former; This false conceit of himself makes him imagine, he is placed in a Rank, far above the Rest of Mankind, alone worthy to be the Favourite of Heaven, and to be employed in all its Designs and Revolutions.

When these two Causes meet, Ignorance of God and a blind Conceit of ourselves, the Enthusiasm is compleat, and it operates according to the different Tempers and Dispositions of the Persons whom it possesses. If the Temper happens to be Fierce, Active and Ambitious; the Enthusiast proves Turbulent and Seditious: If Indolent and Lazy, he rests contented with Prophecy and Vision.

The Free Thinker No. 71.

The active Enthusiasm. (1)⁰...may be considered, either as exciting mento vast attempts; or as procuring them Success in their Enterprises; or lastly, as disposing them to Cruelty, as well in the Prosecution of their Designs, as in the exercise of the Power they happen to establish.

When this Religious Knight-Errantry gets into a Person of a Restless Spirit, it works ups his Ambition to the utmost Extravagance, by persuading him that he is singled out to execute the Designs of Providence. From that Moment he is stung with a Fury, not to be controlled; Unable to resist the violent Impulse, he hurries into Action; Consideration would be loss of time; and he stands acquitted to himself, by a prompt Obedience to the fancied Call. Thus powerfully possest, every wild Project that glows in his Imagination is an immediate Ordinance from

(1) The Free Thinker No. 77 p. 101-102.

Heaven. He flies a Pitch above Common Mischiefs; And dreams now of nothing less, than overturning the Laws, and Constitution, either of his own country; or, of the Nations he intends to invade. So that, from one, whom might have proved an active beneficial Member of Society, he is (by ^{the} Strong Delusion of Enthusiasm) become a sanctified Disturber of the Peace and Happiness of Mankind. And suppose he should not be able to accomplish his frantick Purposes; yet the Miseries, the Confusion and the Desolation, his very attempts are often attended with, are sufficient to make sober men dread the fatal consequences, which even an unsuccessful Enthusiasm may produce.

No Malignity spreads its Infection speedier, and more universally through the Populace, than Enthusiasm. And the Phrenzy of it (like any other Madness) does, for the time, double the natural Strength, and Spirit of Man; and animates him to exert his vigour to a degree, seemingly more than Human.

The Infatuation of the Enthusiast, sets him above the Fear of Death. If he happens to fall in Action or to suffer for his Crime by the Hand of the Executioner, he is ravished with the Conceit of dying a Martyr for the Cause of God, and he sees the Heavens standing open to receive him. ⁽¹⁾..... Moreover, as Enthusiasm animates him, the fierce (and sometime horrid) Aspect, and Intrepidity, of Behavior, which the Fury gives him, does, in proportion, dishearten and terrify his adversaries.

The worst effet of Enthusiasm is, that it disposes men to be cruel in prosecuting their Designs; and tyrannical in the Exercise of Dominion, when they obtain it.

(1) The Free Thinker No. 77-p.103.

Since the Enthusiast soars above all the Rules of Justice and Equity, in forming his Schemes, upon the Supposition of a Divine Authority; there is no Reason to believe, that he will stoop to those Regulations in the Prosecution of his Vast Design. He has one short Argument to justify all his Crimes. They are Divine Injunctions; the Will of God is notified to him..... But what renders the Insolence of this Enthusiast more insupportable is, that while he deals out Mischiefs without measure, he is only securing the Happiness of Mankind, and showering down unconceived Blessings upon his Fellow Creatures. Mercywith him, is indulging men in Miseries, of which they are not sensible, and doing the work of the Lord deceitfully.

If the Heroick Enthusiast happens to beat down all Opposition⁽¹⁾ if he successfully accomplishes his Projects, and becomes fully possessed of Power and Dominion, he never fails to rule his subjects with a Rod of Iron. He fixes with himself, some imaginary insignificant point, on which he will have the Honour of God and the Happiness of Mankind depend. This all men must acknowledge to be authentick, and submit to it without reserve, or undergo his several Displeasure.

These are the general Effects of the Ferment of Enthusiasm, in a turbulent, ambitious spirit; and they manifest themselves with more or less violence, according to the Degree of the Madness; the complexional Activity of the Enthusiast; and the Proportion of Power or Authority, he happens to obtain amongst Men. In a word, it bids defiance to Reason, and consequently can have no Fellowship with the mild, benevolent Influences of true Religion.

(1) The Free Thinker, No. 77, p. 103.

As to the Effects of a Contemplative Enthusiasm,⁽¹⁾ which flatters the mind with Visions and Prophecies, and new Revelations; they are not indeed so immediately destructive as the Influence of the Active Enthusiasm. But they will nevertheless appear upon examination, to be highly prejudicial to the Interests of Society. The Active Enthusiasm urges on its votaries, with vehemence, to every Mischief. The Contemplative incapacitates men to do any Good; The former discharges its Rage outwardly; the latter inwardly consumes the Breast, in which it is kindled; The Activity of the one is a Curse, the supineness of the other, a Clog, upon Society.

The bad effects of this quiet Enthusiasm may be reduced under three General Heads; A Consummate Ignorance, A Total Neglect of Virtue; and an unsociable Pride and Arrogance.

The peaceable Enthusiast has a more expeditious Method of coming at Knowledge and Wisdom, than by Study and Reflection, and Experience. In vain you recommend to him the Use of Books, the Advantages of Languages, and the Improvements of Conversation, to perfect his Understanding.⁽²⁾ He despises the mean Accomplishments of Human Science; and soars, at once, into the clouds of Intuitive Darkness.

If the new Supernatural Light, the Enthusiast boasts of, were imparted to him from above; he would be thereby enlightened (one would think) in a very extraordinary manner, in all the Ideas of Virtue.....

The Enthusiast is generally as far excelled⁽³⁾ by meer Men in

(1) The Free Thinker- No. 83, p.130

(2) Ibid p.131

(3) Ibid p.132.

in Virtue as in Knowledge. His pretended Inspiration leads him out of the plain Tract of Social Vertues, into the Wilds of Speculation, that are of no use to Mankind. And, he seems to have taken up a Notion that Human Virtue, as well as Human Knowledge, is inconsistent with what is Divine. He is all Rapture and Extasy with the Warm Conceits of his own Brain! which with him is loving God: But he has no thoughts, no care of, no Benevolence for Men; or, if he remembers any of his former Notions of Virtue, he looks down upon them as the Beggarly Elements of groveling Mortals.

As an uncommon Degree of Self-Conceit and contempt of others must prevail in the Mind of Man, before Enthusiasm can find Admittance; so, when it has taken possession of the Soul,⁽¹⁾ it fortifies and augments that Insolence and beauty, which first gave it birth. The Enthusiast is in his own Imagination, exalted so high above all sober men, that they are beneath his Notice; unless it be to commiserate their abject Condition. Having his Soul filled with the Raptures which he mistakes for Heavenly, while they are, in reality, Sensual Chim^ameras; he has no feeling of the Sentiments of Humanity, nor Leisure to concern himself in the Affairs of Men. In the meantime, he imagines he amply atones for his contempt of Mankind, by an affected, insincere Humility towards God; to whom he is full of his Acknowledgements for immense Talents, which he never gave.

Such are the principal Failing of the Indolent, Visionary Enthusiast. Upon the whole, it may be observed; that both the Active and Contemplative Enthusiasm, proceed from the utmost extravagance of a distempered Imagination. The one turns Men

(1) The Free Thinker No. 83 p.133.

into Drones and Ideots; and the other makes them daring in the greatest Crimes.

1722-Some were so Enthusiastically bold as to run about the streets, with their Oral Predictions.

That which was the worst in all their devilish language was, that they were not afraid to blaspheme God and talk Atheistically, making a jest at my calling the plague the hand of God; mocking and even laughing at the word judgment, as if the providence of God had no concern in the inflicting such a desolating stroke, and that the people calling upon God as they saw the carts carrying away the dead bodies, was all enthusiastic, absurd, and impertinent. (1).

I cannot but with ^{some} wonder find people, now the contagion is over, talk of its being an immediate stroke from Heaven, having commission to strike this and that particular person, and none others, which I look upon with contempt as the effect of manifest ignorance and enthusiasm. (2)

I suppose the world has heard of Solomon Eagle, an enthusiast. He, though not infected at all in his head, went about denouncing of judgment upon the city in a frightful manner..... What he said, or pretended, indeed I could not learn. (3).

Nor was this (the abatement of the plague) by any new medicine found out, or new method of cure discovered, or by any experience in the operation which the physicians or surgeons attained to; but it was evidently from the secret, invisible hand of Him that

(1) De Foe- Journal of the Plague, Every. Lib. p.75.

(2) Ibid pp85-86

(3) Ibid p. 118.

had at first sent this disease as a judgment upon us; and let the atheistic part of mankind call my saying what they please, it was no enthusiasm.⁽¹⁾

1727-During the usurpation.....an infusion of enthusiastic jargon prevailed.

Swift.Let. Eng.Song.

1729-The subject is a real one; there is nothing in it enthusiastical or unreasonable.

ButlerSerm.Wks.II

1730-About this time there was a meeting of several of the officers and seniors of the college, wherein it was consulted what would be the speediest was to stop the progress of enthusiasm in it. The result we know not, only it was soon publicly reported that Dr._____ and the censors were going to blow up the Godly Club. This was now our common title; though we were sometimes dignified with that of Enthusiasts.

Wesley,J. Let. to Mr. Morgan.

To means of grace the last respect he showed,
Nor sought new paths, as wiser than his God;
Their sacred strength preserv'd him from extremes
Of empty outside or enthusiast dreams:

Wesley,S. On deathof Mr. Morgan.

Oh!bear me then to vast embowering shades,
To twilight groves and visionary vales;
To weeping grottos, and prophetic glooms;
Where angel forms athwart the solemn dusk,
Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep along:
And voices more than human through the void
Deep-sounding, seize the enthusiastic ear!

Thomson, Autumn

1731-If some people, by a long and strict attention to Reason, clear ideas, the fitness and unfitness of things, have at last arrived at a demonstrative certainty, that all these sentiments of piety and devotion, are mere bigotry, superstition, and enthusiasm; I shall only now observe that youthful extravagance, passion and debauchery, by their own natural tendency, without the assistance of any other guide, seldom fail of making the same discovery.

Law, The Case of Reason Wks.II.P.71.

1736-They(unbelievers)allege, that numberless enthusiastic people, in different ages and countries, expose themselves to the same difficulties which the primitive Christians did; and are ready to give up their lives for the most idle follies imaginable.And though testimony is no proof of enthusiastic opinions, or of any opinions at all, yet it is allowed in all other cases to be a proof of facts.

But enthusiasm, it is said, greatly weakens the evidence of testimony, even for facts, in matters relating to religion; some seem to think it totally and absolutely destroys the evidence of testimony upon this subject. And indeed the powers of enthusiasm, and of diseases too, which operate in a like manner, are very wonderful in particular instances. But if great numbers of men, not appearing in any peculiar suspicion of negligence, affirm that they saw and heard such things plainly with their eyes and ears, and are admitted to be in earnest, such testimony is evidence of the strongest kind we can have, for any matter of fact. Yet possibly it may be overcome, strong as it is, by incredibility in the things thus attested or by contrary

testimony. And in an instance where one thought it was so overcome, it might be just to conceal, how far such evidence could be accounted for, by enthusiasm; for it seems as if no other imaginable account were to be given of it. But until such incredibility is shown, or contrary testimony produced, it cannot surely be expected, that so far fetched, so indirect and wonderful an account of such testimony, as that of enthusiasm must be an account so strange, that the generality of mankind can scarce be made to understand what is meant by it; and it cannot, I say, be expected that such account will be admitted of such evidence; when there is this direct, easy and obvious account of it, that people really saw and heard a thing not incredible, which they affirm sincerely and with full assurance, they did see and hear. Granting then that enthusiasm is not (strictly speaking) an absurd, but a possible account of such testimony; it is manifest, that the very mention of it goes upon the previous supposition, that the things so attested are incredible; and therefore need not be considered till they are shown to be so. Much less need it be considered after the contrary has been proved, and I think it has been proved, to full satisfaction, that there is no incredibility in a revelation, in general; or in such a one as the Christian in particular. However, as religion is supposed peculiarly liable to enthusiasm, it may be observed, that prejudices almost without number, and without name, romance, affectation, humour, a desire to engage attention, or to surprise the party spirit, custom, little competitions, unaccountable likings and dislikings. And prejudices are often scarce known and reflected upon by the persons themselves, who are influenced by them, they are to be considered

as influences of a like kind of enthusiasm.

It is intimated further, in a more refined way of observation⁽¹⁾, that though it should be proved, that the Apostles and the first Christians could not, in some respects, be deceived themselves, and, in other respects, cannot be thought to have intended to impose upon the world; yet it will not follow, that their general testimony is to be believed, though truly handed down tous; because they might still in part; i.e., in other respects, be deceived themselves, and in part also designedly impose upon others; which, it is added, is a thing very credible, from that mixture of real enthusiasm and real knavery, to be met with in the same characters.

Upon the whole, then, the general observation,⁽²⁾ that human creatures are so liable to be deceived, from enthusiasm in religion, and principles equivalent to enthusiasm in common matters, and in both from negligence; and that they are so capable of dishonestly endeavouring to deceive others; this does indeed weaken the evidence of testimony in all cases, but does not destroy it in any. And these things will appear, to different men, to weaken the evidence of testimony, in different degrees; in degrees proportionable to the observations they have made, or the notions they have any way taken up, concerning the weakness and negligence and dishonesty of mankind; or concerning the powers of enthusiasm and prejudices equivalent to it.

1737-38-One may say that the most unchristian things, even down to Deism, the most enthusiastic things, so they proceed but upon mental raptures, lights, and unions, the most severe things, even

(1) Butler, Analogy Part II, viii p.284

(2) Ibid p.285

the whole vigour of ascetic mortification; and all this will be forgiven.

In the same even, quiet state I was till the evening, when I was roughly attacked in a large company as an enthusiast, a seducer, and a setter forth of new doctrines.⁽¹⁾

1738-Or are our fears, that enthusiast's empty dream,

And all the scenes, that hurt the grave's repose,

But pictured horreur and poetic woes.⁽²⁾

Rome, rising on her own foundation, independent on, and unrelated to any other State, and early possessed with the high enthusiasm of distinction and empire, would naturally esteem her tutelary Gods as her own peculiar.

Warburton, Div. Leg. Bk. II, 6.

1739-I was with two persons, who I doubt are properly enthusiasts.

For, first, they think to attain the end without the means; which is enthusiasm properly so called. Again, they think themselves

inspired by God, and are not. But false, imaginary inspiration is enthusiasm. That theirs is only imaginary inspiration appears, hence it contradicts the law and the testimony.

I have often wished that all calm and impartial men would consider what is advanced by another writer, in a little dissertation concerning enthusiasm or religious delusion, published about this time. His words are, A minister of our church, who may look upon it as his duty to warn his parishoners, or an author who may think it necessary to caution his readers against such Preachers, or their doctrines (enthusiastic Preachers, I suppose, such as he

(1) Wesley's Journal- Feb. 1, 1737-8 to his return from Germany.

(2) Gray's Wks. I, Ed. Gosse- Propertius Lib. III, 5.

takes it for granted the Methodist Preachers are), ought to be very careful to act with a Christian Spirit, and to advance nothing but with temper, charity, and truth.

Wesley's Journal-Aug.12,1738 to Nov.1,1739.

The next morning a young gentleman overtook me on the road, and after a while asked me, "If I had seen Whitefield's Journals?" I told him, "I had." "And what do you think of them", said he. "Don't you think they are d---n'd cant, enthusiasm from end to end? I think so." I asked him, "Why do you think so?" He replied, "Why, he talks so much about joy and stuff, and inward feelings. As I hope to be saved, I cannot tell what to make of it." I asked, "Did you ever feel the love of God in your heart? If not, how should you tell what to make of it? Whatever is spoken of the religion of the heart, and of the inward workings of the Spirit of God, must appear enthusiasm to those who have not felt them; that is, if they take upon them to judge of the things which they own they know not."

Dr.W----- told me, after sermon, "Sir, you must not preach in the afternoon. "Not", said he,"that you preach any false doctrine, I allow that you have said is true; and it is the doctrine of the Church of England. But it is not guarded; it is dangerous; it may lead people into enthusiasm or despair."

I know, indeed, there is a way of explaining these texts so that they shall mean just nothing; so that they shall express far less of inward religion than the writings of Plato or Hierocles, and whoever guards them thus (but God forbid, I should do it) will undoubtedly avoid all danger of either driving people into this despair, or leading them into this enthusiasm.

Ibid. Nov.1,1739 to Sept.3,1741.

1739- Busy, inquisitive Reason, learned enough in its own sphere, grammatically skilled in Scripture--Knowledge, looking no further, or deeper into the things of God, than a Dictionary can guide it, cannot bear the language of the regenerate, inward man, but condemns it as fanatical, and enthusiastic; not considering that this rational man which made the Judge of Salvation, is the very individual old Man with his Deeds, that we are by the Religion of the Gospel, to be saved, and delivered from.

Law- Grounds and Reasons, Wks.V.p.164.

1740-Supported by this text(the Sin, Folly, and Danger of being righteous over-much) the Doctor(Trapp)endeavors to deter and frighten Christians from the Sin, Folly, and Danger,of being righteous over-much and from what he calls the baneful Plague of Enthusiasm.⁽¹⁾

The first Chapter of Genesis will be a knot that cannot be untied;⁽²⁾the Mysteries of the Gospel will only be called foederal Rites, and their inward Ground reproached as enthusiastic Dreams. If you are a Deist⁽³⁾made so either by the disorderly state of your own Heart, or by Prejudices taken from the corruptions and Divisions of Christians, or from a Dislike of the language of Scripture, or from an opinion of the Sufficiency of a Religion of Human Reason, or from Whatever else it may be, look well to yourself. Christianity is no Fiction of Enthusiasm or Invention of Priests.

And if some Learned Men will say,⁽⁴⁾that it is Religious

(1) Law-Earrest and Serious Ans.toDr.Trapp, Wks.VI.p.4.

(2) Law-Appeal to all who doubt, Wks. VI. 1, p.82

(3) Ibid p.87

(4) Ibid p.95

Enthusiasm to place our Salvation or Capacity for the Kingdom of Heaven in the inward Life or Birth of Heaven derived into our Souls, they are only as learned as those who should call it Philosophical Enthusiasm to place the true Nature of a Vegetable or Animal, in its getting the inward, real Birth of a Vegetable and animal Life.

He that has been all his life long used to look⁽¹⁾ with great Abhorrence upon those whom he has called superstitious Bigots, dreaming visionaries, false Saints, canting Enthusiasts, etc. must naturally expect they will be treated by God as they have been by him.

I come now to that which the Doctor(Trapp)says of Enthusiasm and Enthusiasts⁽²⁾ Speaking to the younger Clergy of the Means of attaining Divine Knowledge, I had these Words, "The Book of all Books is your own Heart in which are written the deepest Lessons of Divine Instruction; learn therefore to be deeply attentive to the presence of God in your Hearts, who is always speaking, always illuminating that Heart that is attentive to him⁽³⁾..... And if there is always Light in Nature, a Light that cannot be extinguished, must it not come from the all-illuminating Being? Yet Dr. Trapp says that this 'is Enthusiasm, if ever there was any' in the world; that they are the 'Words of Falsehood and Frenzy'. *If the Doctor had been clear in this matter, it had been very easy for him to have shown his Reader wherein this Enthusiasm and Frenzy lay; and it was also necessary for him to have here said something very plain and clear concerning the

(1) Law-Animad. upon Dr. Trapp, Wks. VI. p. 185

(2) Ibid p. 195. * Dr. Trapp's Discourse of the Folly, Sin and

(3) Ibid p. 196 Danger of being Righteous Overmuch.

Ground of Enthusiasm; ⁽¹⁾For, if his Reader, without any clear and distinct Notion of Enthusiasm, is taught to cry out against a Doctrine, which only teaches that God is always speaking, instructing and illuminating that Heart that is in great Purity turned to him; if he is taught boldly and blindly to condemn this as Enthusiasm and Frenzy, how shall such a one be able to defend himself, when he is told by others, that two-thirds of the New Testament is Enthusiasm? As where it is said, 'I am the Light and Life of the World'.....In our Liturgy we pray that God would prevent us in all our Doings, and further us with his continual Help; That we may obey the godly Motions of the Spirit in Righteousness and true Holiness; that by his holy Inspiration we may think those that be good.....Now what must the unlearned Reader, or the learned Doctor himself do with these and the like places of Scripture, and Prayers of the Church, if it be Enthusiasm, Falsehood, and Frenzy to say, that God is intimately present in the Depth of our Souls.....But I shall here speak a word or two of the true Ground, and Nature of Enthusiasm.

In Will, Imagination and Desire ⁽²⁾consists the Life, or fiery Driving of every intellectual Creature. And as every intelligent Creature is its own Self-mover, so every intelligent Creature has Power of kindling and inflaming its Will, Imagination, and Desire as it pleases, with Shadows, Fictions, or Realities; with things carnal or spiritual, temporal or eternal. And this kindling of the Will, Imagination, and Desire, when raised into a ruling Degree of Life, is properly that which is understood by

(1) Law- Animad. upon Dr. Trapp, Wks. VI. p. 197.

(2) Ibid p. 197

Enthusiasm; And therefore Enthusiasm is, and must be of as many kinds as those objects are, which can kindle and inflame the Wills, Imaginations and Desires of Men.⁽¹⁾ An to appropriate Enthusiasm to Religion, is the same Ignorance of Nature, as to appropriate Love to Religion; for Enthusiasm, a kindled, imflamed Spirit of Life, is as common, as universal, as essential to human Nature, as Love is; it goes into every kind of Life as Love does, and has only such a variety of Degrees in Mankind, as Love hath. And here we may see the Reason, why no People are so angry at Religious Enthusiasts, as those that are the deepest in some Enthusiasm of another kind.

It matters not what our Wills and Imaginations are employed about; wherever they fall and love to dwell, there they kindle a fire, and that becomes the Flame of Life, to which everything else appears as dead, and insipid, and unworthy of Regard. Hence it is that the poor species of Fops and Beaux have a right to be placed among Enthusiasts, though capable of no other Flame than that which is kindled by Tailors and Peruke-Makers. All refined specialists, as such, are great Enthusiasts; for being devoted to the exercise of their Imaginations, they are so heated into a Love of their own Ideas, that they seek no other Summum Bonum. The Grammmarian, the Critic, the Poet, the Connoisseur, the Antiquary, the Philosopher, the Politician, are all violent Enthusiasts, though their Heat is only a Flame from straw, and therefore they all agree in appropriating Enthusiasm to Religion. All ambitious, proud, self-conceited Persons, especially if they

(1) Law- Animad. upon Dr. Trapp, Wks. VI. p. 198.

are scholars, are violent Enthusiasts, and their Enthusiasm is an inflamed Self-Love, Self-Esteem, and Self-Seeking..... All Atheists are dark Enthusiasts; their fire is kindled by a Will and Imagination turned from God into a gloomy Depth of Nothingness, and therefore their Enthusiasm is a dull burning Fire, that goes in and out, through Hopes and Fears of they know not what that is to come. All professed Infidels are remarkable Enthusiasts, they have kindled bold Fire from a few faint Ideas, and therefore they are all Zeal, and Courage and Industry, to be constantly blowing it up.

Enthusiasts therefore we all are,⁽¹⁾ as certainly as we are Men; and consequently, Enthusiasm is not a thing blamable in itself, but is the common condition of human Life in all its States; and every man that lives either well or ill, is that which he is, from that prevailing Fire of Life, or driving of our Wills and Desires, which is properly called Enthusiasm. You need not then go to the Cloister, the Cell of a Monk, or to a Field Preacher, to see Enthusiasts; they are everywhere, at Balls and Masquerades, at Court and the Exchange; they sit in all coffeehouses, and cant in all Assemblies. The Beau and Coquette have no Magic, but where they meet Enthusiasts. The Mercer, the Tailor, the Bookseller have all their wealth from them; the works of a Boyle, a Shaftesbury, and Cicero, would lose four Fifths of their astonishing Beauties, had they not been Enthusiasts for their Readers.

That which concerns us therefore, is only to see with what Materials our prevailing Fire of Life is kindled, and in what Species of Enthusiasts it truly places us. Enthusiasm is not blamable in Religion, when it is true Religion that kindles it....

(1) Law- Animad. upon Dr. Trapp, Wks. VI. p. 199

.....Religious Enthusiasm⁽¹⁾ is not blamable when it is a strong Persuasion, a firm Belief of a continual Operation, Impression and Influence from above, when it is a total Resignation to, and Dependence upon the immediate Inspiration and Guidance of the Holy Spirit in the whole course of our Lives. Every Christian, as such, has the first fruits of the Spirit, a seed of Life, which is his Call and Qualification to be always in a State of inward Prayer, Faith, and holy Intercourse with God.⁽²⁾ All the Ordinances of the Gospel, the daily sacramental Service of the Church, is to keep up and exercise, and strengthen this Faith; to raise us to such an habitual Faith and Dependence upon the Light and holy Spirit of God, that by thus seeking and finding God in the Institutions of the Church, we may be habituated to seek him and find him; to live in his light, and walk by his Spirit in all the actions of our ordinary Life. This is the Enthusiasm in which every good Christian ought to endeavour to live and die.

I come now to an Enthusiast (Jacob Behmen),, which the Doctor has accidentally met with.

Sir Isaac Newton well knew, that Prejudice⁽³⁾ and Partiality had such Power over many People's Judgments, that Doctrines, though ever so deeply founded in, and proved by all the appearances of Nature, would be suspected by some as dangerous, and condemned by others, even as false and wicked, had made any References to an Author that was only called an Enthusiast.

Dr. Trapp may take himself for an eminent Example and Proof of this.⁽⁴⁾.....For here is a Stranger, a Layman, not so much

(1) Law- Animad. upon Dr. Trapp, Wks. VI. p. 200.

(2) Ibid. p. 200.

(3) Ibid p. 201

(4) Ibid p. 202

as known to the Doctor by name who.....has gained upon the Doctor by no other Marks of Ability and Judgment, but his Compliments to him and his Scurrility upon me; From the authority of this Informer, the Doctor immediately puts J.B. into his list of Enthusiasts.....Am I to suppose that this has been the Doctor's Method upwards of thirty-seven years; calling one Man an Enthusiast, another a Fanatic, this a monstrous, that ^{the} most per-nicious Book of the Age.....But I hope the Doctor is singular in this Spirit; for if it could be supposed that it was common amongst learned Men, to get their Knowledge of ancient and modern, foreign and domestic Enthuiasts as hastily and slightly as the Doctor here doth.

And it may be believed, that the Doctor would have been amongst the first and loudest of those who would have cried out at my Folly and Presumption in directing to an Author, whom all the World knew to be an illiterate Enthusiast.

Law-Animad.upon Dr.Trapp, Wks.VI.p.203

To what a Height of Fanatic Madness in Doctrine, as well as Practice are some advanced who set out at first with an Appearance of more than ordinary Sanctity in Practice only?.....I do say that in all Ages Enthusiasts have been 'Righteous over-much'; they began with the last mentioned and ended with the other, and is it not so now?(1)

1741-I endeavoured to show them the ground of many of their mistakes, from these words,"Ye need not that any man teach you, but as that same anointing teacheth you", a text which had been frequently brought in support of the rankest enthusiasm.

(1) Law- Trapp-Folly, Sin and Danger, Wks.VI.p.8.

A Spirit of Enthusiasm was breaking in upon many, who charged their own imaginations on the will of God, and that not written, but impressed on their hearts.

Wesley's Journal-Nov.1,1739 to Sept.3,
1741.

1742-The great comfort I found, both in public and private , almost every day of the ensuing week, I apprehend was to prepare me for what followed; a short account of which I sent to London soon after, in a letter the copy of which I have subjoined; although I am sensible that there are several circumstances therein which some may set down for mere enthusiasm and extravagance.

The sermon on "Quench not the Spirit" was not suitable to the expectation of many of the hearers. Mr. Romley told them, "One of the most dangerous ways of quenching the Spirit was by enthusiasm"; and enlarged on the character of an enthusiast in a very florid and oratorical manner.

On Wednesday and Thursday, in riding from Evesham to Bristol, I read over that surprising book, The Life of Ignatius Loyola; Surely one of the greatest men that ever was engaged in the support of so bad a cause; I wonder any man should judge him to be an enthusiast.

I was both surprised and grieved, at a genuine instance of enthusiasm. J---- B----, of Tanfield, Leigh, who had received a sense of the love of God, a few days before came riding through the town, hallooing and shouting, and driving all the people before him, telling them, "God had told him he should be a king, and should tread all his enemies under his feet".

Wesley's Journal-Sept.3,1741 to Oct.27,1743

1742-1744-If earth's whole orb, by some due distant eye
 Were seen at once, her towering Alps would sink,
 And levell'd Atlas leave an even sphere.
 Thus earth, and all that earthly mind admire,
 Is swallowed in Eternity's vast round.
 To that stupendous view, when souls awake,
 So large of late, so mountainous to man,
 Time's toys subside and equal all below.
Enthusiastic this? Then all are weak
 But rank enthusiasts.

Young's Night Thoughts- Night VI.

Seas, rivers, mountains, forests, deserts, rocks,
 The promontory's height, the depth profound
 Of subterranean excavated grotts
 Black-brow'd, and vaulted high and yawning wide,
 From nature's structure, or the scorp of Time;
 If ample of dimension, vast of size,
 Ev'n these an aggrandizing impulse give;
 Of solemn thought, enthusiastic heights.

Ibid. Night IX.

1743- I was a little afraid at first that my strength would not suffice for the business of the day, when a service of five hours (for it lasted from ten to three) was added to my usual employment; but God looked to that, so I must think; and they that call it enthusiasm may.

Wesley's Journal-Sept. 3, 1741 to Oct. 27, 1743

1744-Here is a small poem called The "Enthusiast", which is all pure description.

Gray's Works II, Ed. Gosse, Lett.xlix.

1745-Here I took leave of a poor, mad, original enthusiast, who had been scattering abroad lies in every quarter.

I had much conversation with Mr.Simpson, an original enthusiast.

Wesley's Journal-Oct.27,1743 to Nov.17,1746.

Circ.1745- "Enthusiast,go unstring the lyre;

In vain thou sing'st, if none admire,

How sweet soe'er the strain.

And is not thy o'erflowing mind,

Unless thou mixest with thy kind,

Benevolent in vain?"

"Enthusiast, go; try every sense;

If not thy bliss, thy excellence

Thou yet hast learn'd to scan.

At least thy wants, thy weakness know;

And see them all uniting show

That man was made for man!"

Whitehead's The Enthusiast.

1746-It is the believing those to be miracles which are not, that constitutes an enthusiast.

Wesley, Princ. Methodist.

Long by the loved enthusiast woo'd

Himself in some diviner mood,

Retiring, sate with her alone,

And placed her on his sapphire throne;

Collin's Ode on the Poetical Character

1747-There is really such a thing as Enthusiasm, against which it becomes the tru Friends of Revelation to be diligently on their Guard.

Doddridge- Life of Gardiner.

1748-The morning prayers, so called, began about twelve; after which we had a warm sermon against enthusiasts.

Wesley's Journal- Nov.25,1746 to July 20,1749

1749- What a Philosopher would he be, who for fear of being called an Enthusiast, should here deny the literal meaning of a new Birth of Light and Air, and think himself sufficiently justified in flying from it, because in his great Readings he had seen the words, Birth, Light and Air, sometimes and upon some Occasions, used only in the figurative Sense.

Law- The Spirit of Prayer, I. . Wks.VIII.

For at this day(Oh sad Truth to be told)at this Day, a Christ within us, an inward Saviour raising a Birth of his own Nature, Life and Spirit within us, is rejected as gross Enthusiasm, the learned Rabbies take Counsel against it.

Ibid. Ch.ii. p.27.

There is no Light in the Mind, but what is the Light of Life; so far as our Life reaches, so far we understand and feel and know, and no further. All after this is only the Play of our Imagination, amusing itself with the dead Pictures of its own Ideas. Now this is all that the Natural Man, who has not the Life of God in him, can possibly do with the things foreign to himself, as so many dead Ideas, that he receives from Books or Hearsay; and so can learnedly dispute and quarrel about them and laugh at those

Enthusiasts, who have a living Sensibility of them.⁽¹⁾

Nay, if those ancient Sages(Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato or Epictetus)were to start up amongst us with their Divine Wisdom, they would bid fair to be treated by the sons of the Gospel, if not by some Fathers of the Church, as dreaming Enthusiasts.⁽²⁾

Earnestly, thereforð. to pray, humbly to hope, and faithfully to expect, to be continually inspired, and animated by the Holy Spirit of God has no more of Vanity, Fanaticism or enthusiastic Wildness in it, than to hope and pray, to act in everything from and by a good Spirit.⁽³⁾

1749-The several enthusiastic sects that arise from time to time among Christians.

Hartley. Observ. Man II, ii.

1750-The right state and disposition of mind to make proper improvements---in this were to be considered the nature of scepticism, dogmaticalness, enthusiasm, superstition, etc.

Warburton- On theological Studies, 1.^x

When I say the appearance of religion, I do not mean that you should talk or act like a Missionary, or an Enthusiast.

Chesterfield- Letter xlviii.

That all are equally happy.....none is sufficiently enthusiastic to maintain.

Johnson, Rambler No.63.

1751-Enthusiasm is grown into a fashionable term of reproach, that usually comes uppermost, when anything of deep and serious nature is mentioned. We apply it, through an indolent custom,

(1) Law-The Spirit of Prayer, ch.II Wks.p.100

(2) Ibid p.103

(3) Ibid p.139

1. "an ambition in projected work on Theological studies for the use of young people. communicated to Bishop Hurd by letter as early as 1750. afterwards made to serve by way of change to his charge."

to sober and considerate assertions of important truths, as readily as to wild and extravagant contenders about them..... The best writers on the best subjects are unattended to, and the benefit accruing from their love and their labours, is not perceived by us.....We have heard it said and have seen it printed, that they are enthusiasts; and to avoid the imputation of that character, we run into it at second hand, and adopt the rashness and injustice of impetuous originals; we take the stalest exclamations for the freshest proofs; and the affected retailing of madness, mysticism, Behmenism, and the like decisive outcries, contents us as if there were something of sense, wit, or demonstration in it.

When this low kind of enthusiasm is alert enough to gain its point, the writer of a good book may possibly lose the applause, which it is highly probable that he never sought for..... Men of superior fluency in expressing their own conceptions are not always sedate enough to examine, or judicious enough to discover, the principles which might undeceive them. The first obstruction to their hypothesis may pass, with them, for an immediate confutation of any book whatsoever; they may show their learning, their zeal, or their contempt, and speak of an enthusiasm different from their own, as quickly as they please.

The enthusiasm which is hence enkindled reigns and rages unsuspected, while that of a juster kind, the genuine effect of a true life and spirit, arising from what is lovely, harmonious, and substantial, is in danger of being extinguished by it.

In short, there is a right enthusiasm as well as a wrong one; and a man is free to admit which he pleases; but one he must have

as sure as he has a head;

So long as they have only light enough to hate light, they may, upon the first glimpse of it, retire to their earthliness, and push out their works as thick as mole-hills; but in reality, a single page, proceeding from the right spirit, whose enthusiasm they all despise, is worth a library of such a produce.

"Fly from Enthusiasm--it is the pest,
Bane, poison, frenzy, fury--and the rest."

This is the cry that oft when truth appears,
Forbids attention to our list'ning ears;

A book, perhaps, beyond the vulgar page,
Removes at once the lumber of an age;
Truth is presented; strikes upon our eyes;
We feel conviction, and we fear surprise;
We gaze, admire, dispute, and then the bawl--

"Fly from Enthusiasm"---that answers all.

Now when the mind determines thus its force,
The man becomes enthusiast of course.
What is enthusiasm? What can it be,
But thought enkindled to an high degree?
That may, whatever be its ruling turn,
Right or not right, with equal ardor burn.
It must be therefore various in its kind,
As objects vary, that engage the mind;
When to religion we confine the word,
What use of language can be more absurd?
'Tis just as true, that many words beside,

As love, or zeal, are only thus apply'd;
 To ev'ry kind of life they all belong;
 Men may be eager, tho' their views be wrong;
 And hence the reason, why the greatest foes
 To true religious earnestness are those
 Who fire their wits upon a diff'rent theme,
 Deep in some false, enthusiastic scheme.

One man politely seized with classic rage
 Dotes on old Rome, and its Augustan Age;
 Or those great souls who thenor there abouts,
 Made in their state such roits and such routs.

Where does all sense to him and reason shine?
 Behold--in Tully's rhetoric divine!
 Tully! enough---high o'er the Alps he's gone,
 To tread the ground that Tully trod upon;

Well may this grand enthusiast deride
 The dulness of a pilgrim's humbler pride
 Who paces to behold that part of earth
 Which to the Saviour of the World gave birth;

Another's heated brain is painted o'er
 With ancient hieroglyphic marks of yore.

To soar aloft on obeliskal clouds;
 To dig down deep into the dark--for shrouds;
 To vex old matters chronicled in Greek.
 While those of his own parish are to seek;
 What can come forth from such an antic taste
 But a Clarissimus Enthusiast?

x

However poor and empty be the sphere,
 'Tis all, if inclination center there;
 Its own enthusiasts each system knows,
 Down to lac'd fops, and powder sprinkled beaus.
 Great wits, affecting what they call, to think;
 That deep immers'd in speculation sink,
 Are great enthusiasts, howe'er refined,
 Whose brain-bred notions so inflame the mind,
 That, during the continuance of its heat,
 The summum bonum is--its own conceit;
 Critics, with all their learning recondite,
 Poets, that severally be-mused write;
 The virtuosos, whether great or small;
 The connoisseurs, that know the worth of all;
 Philosophers, that dictate sentiments,
 And politicians, wiser than events;
 Such, and such-like come under the same law,
 Altho' their heat be from a flame of straw;
 Altho' in one absurdity they chime,
 To make religious entheasm a crime.

x

Self-love, in short, wherever it is found,
 Tends to its own enthusiastic ground;

x

Atheists are dark enthusiasts indeed,
 Whose fire enkindles like the smoking weed;

x

Think not that you are no enthusiast, then;
 All men are such, as sure as they are men.

The thing itself is noat at all to blame;
 'Tis in each state of human life the same.
 The fiery bent, the driving of the will,
 That gives the prevalence to good or ill.
 You need not go to cloisters or to cells,
 Monk or field preachers to see where it dwells;
 It dwells alike in balls and masquerades;
 Courts, camps, and 'Changes it alike pervades.
 There be enthusiasts, who love to sit
 In coffeehouses and cant out their wit.
 The first in most assemblies would you see
 Mark out the first haranguer, and that's he:
 Nay 'tis what silent meetings cannot hide,
 It may benoticed by its mere outside,
 Beaus and coquets would quit the magic dress
 Did not this mutual instinct both possess.
 The mercer, Taylor, bookseller, grows rich,
 Because fine clothes, fine writings can bewitch.
 A Cicero, a Shaftesbury, a Boyle
 How quick would they diminish in their sale?
 Four flights of all their beauties who would heed,
 Had they not keen enthusiasts to read?

That which concerns us therefore is to see
 What species of enthusiasts we be.

*

Content to think such thoughtless thinking right,
 And common sense enthusiastic flight.

"Fly from Enthusiasm?" Yes, fly from air,
 And breathe it more intensely for your care.

*

When true religion kindles up the fire,
 Who can condemn the vigorous desire?
 That burns to reach the end for which 'twas given,
 To shine, and sparkle in its native Heav'n?
 What else was our creating Father's view?
 His image lost why sought he to renew?
 Why all the scenes of love that Christians know,
 But to attract us from this poor below?
 To save us from the fatal choice of ill,
 And bless the free co-operating will?

Blame not Enthusiasm, if rightly bent;

*

All that the gospel ever could obtain,
 All that the church's daily rites maintain,
 Is to keep up, to strengthen, and employ,
 This lively faith, this principle of joy;
 This hope and this possession of the end,
 Which all her pious institutes intend:
 Fram'd to convey, when freed from wordy strife
 Wherein th'eternal Parent of all Good
 By his own influence is understood,
 That man may learn infallibly aright,
 Blest in his presence, seeing in his light,
 To gain the habit of a godlike mind,
 To seek his holy Spirit, and to find.

In this enthusiasm, advanc'd thus high,
 'Tis a true Christian's wish, to live, and die.

Byrom: Enthusiasm.

Many indeed, though torn from us, would not stay with them, but broke out into the wildest enthusiasm.

Wesley's Journal-Nov.2,1751 to Oct.28,1754.

1752-The enthusiastic and seditious opinions of Muncer and the Anabaptists.

Cart. Hist. Eng. III.

When I had taken my Degrees, I consulted several Divines, to put me in a method of studying Divinity. Had I said to them, 'Sirs, What must I do to be saved?' they would have prescribed Hellebore to me, or directed me to the Physician as a vapoured Enthusiast.

Law:Way to Div.Know.Dialogue II,Wks.VII-p.192.

If you are reproached as an enthusiast, do not take comfort in thinking, that it is the Truth of your own Piety or the want of it in others, that gives Occasion to the Charge.

Ibid. Dialogue III- pp.250-251.

About five I began, near the Keelman's Hospital, many thousands standing round, or sitting on the Grass. The wind was high just before; but scarce a breath was felt, all the time we assembled before God. I praise God for this also. Is it Enthusiasm to see God in every Benefit which we receive?

Wesley's Journal-July 20-1750 to Oct.28,1754.

1753-Upon inquiry I found these wild enthusiasts were six in all; four men and two women. They had at first run into the height of Antinomianism, and then were given up to the spirit of pride and blasphemy.

Ibid. Nov.2,1751 to Oct.28,1754.

1754-How unreasonable is it, to call perpetual Inspiration, Fanaticism and Enthusiasm, when there cannot be the least degree of Goodness or Happiness in any intelligent Being, but what is in its whole Nature, merely and truly the Breathing, the Life and the Operation of God in the Life of the Creature.

Whata Mistake is it to confine Inspiration to particular Times and Occasions, to Prophets and Apostles and Extraordinary Messengers of God, and call it Enthusiasm when the common Christian looks and trusts to be continually led and inspired by the Spirit of God! (1)

What a miserable Mistake is it, therefore, to place religious Goodness in outward Observances, in Notions and Opinions, which good and bad men can equally receive and practice, and to treat the ready, real Power and Operation of an inward Life of God in the Birth of our Souls, as Fanaticism and Enthusiasm. (2)

For though some people have been hasty enough to charge those writings* with Fanaticism, or Enthusiasm, as disclaiming the use of our Reason in Religious Matters, yet this charge can be made by none, but those who having not read them, take up with hearsay censures.

The Religion of Deism is false, and vain, and visionary and to be rejected by every man as the mere enthusiastic, fanatic Product of pure Imagination; and all for this plain Reason, because it quite disregards the Nature of Things, stands wholly upon a supernatural Ground, and goes as much above, and as directly con-

(1) Law- Spirit of Love, Part II. Dia. i, Wks. VIII p.45

(2) Ibid pp.52-53.

* Law's 'Demonstration of the Errors of the Plain Account' and 'The Appeal to all that doubt, etc'.

trary to the Powers of Nature, as that Faith that trust in and prays to a wooden God.

In this Spirit of Love I charge them(Deists)with visionary Faith, and enthusiastic Religion; and only so far, as I have from Time to Time proved, that they trust to be saved by that, which according to the unchangeable Nature of Things can have no Power of Salvation in it.

A Religion not grounded in the Power and Nature of Things, is unnatural, supernatural, or superrational, and is rightly called, either Enthusiasm, Vision, Fanaticism, Superstition, or Idolatry, just as you please. For all these are but different Names for one and the same religious Delusion, and every Religion is this Delusion but that one Religion which is required by, and has its Efficiency in and from the unchangeable Nature of Things.⁽¹⁾

Circ.1755-Tho' all these reason worshippers profess

To guard against fanatical excess,
Enthusiastic heat---their fav'rite theme
 Draws their attention to the cold extreme;
 Then fears of torrid fervours freezed soul;
 To shun the zone they send it to the pole.

Byrom- Thoughts upon Human Reason.

1756-I preached in the Session-House at seven to most of the inhabitants of the town; but Satan had prepared one of his instruments when I had done, to catch the seed out of their hearts; a poor enthusiast began a dull, pointless harangue about hirelings

(1) Law- Spirit of Love, Part II, Dia. ii, Wks. VIII p.93

and false prophets; but the door-keeper crying out, "I am going to lock the doors", cut his discourse short.

Wesley's Journal-Feb.16,1755 to June 16,1758.

In reality, a great clearness helps but little to-wards affecting the passions, as it is in some sort an enemy to all enthusiasm whatever.

Burke- Sublime and Beautiful, Part II Sec.iii

Here is a poet(Mr.Blacklock)doubtless as much affected by his own descriptions as any that read them can be; and yet he is affected with this strong enthusiasm by things of which he neither has nor can possibly have any idea further than that of a bare sound.

Ibid. Part V. Sec.v.

1759-Enthusiastic Confidence or unsatisfying doubts terminate all our inquiries.

Goldsmith- Citz.of World. Lett.xxxvi.

Enthusiasm in every country produces the same effects, stick the Faquir with pins, or confine the Bramin to a vermin hospital; spread the Talopoin on the ground, or load the sectary's brow with contrition; those worshippers who discard the light of reason are ever gloomy.

Yet there is still a stronger reason for the enthusiast's being an enemy to laughter; namely, his being himself so proper an object of ridicule...

Ridicule has ever been the most powerful enemy of enthusiasm, and properly the only antagonist that can be opposed to it with success. Persecution only serves to propagate new religions;

they acquire fresh vigour beneath the executioner and the axe; and like some vivacious insects, multiply by dissection. It is also impossible to combat enthusiasm with reason, for though it makes a show of resistance, it soon eludes the pressure;-----refers you to distinctions not to be understood, and feelings which it cannot explain...

By this time you perceive that I am describing a sect of enthusiasts.

A man who would endeavour to fix an enthusiasm by argument might as well attempt to spread quicksilver with his fingers. The only way to conquer a visionary is to despise him; the stake, the faggot, and the disputing doctor in some measure ennoble the opinions they are brought to oppose; they are harmless against innovating pride; contempt alone is truly dreadful..... On what side the enthusiast is most vulnerable, may be known by the care which he takes in the beginning to work his disciples into gravity and guard them against the power of ridicule.

Ibid. Letter cxi.

1760-He is very warm against the people, vulgarly termed 'Methodists' 'ridiculous imposters', 'religious buffoons', as he styles them; 'saint errants' (a pretty and quaint phrase) full of 'inconsiderateness, madness, melancholy, enthusiasm,' teaching a 'knotty and unintelligible system' of religion, yea, a 'contradictory or self-contradictory'. Nay, a 'mere illusion', a 'destructive scheme, and of pernicious consequence;' 'since' an hypothesis is a very slippery foundation to hazard our all upon'.

The tract wrote by the gentleman in the North is far more bulky than this; but it is more considerable for its bulk than for

its matter, being little more than a dull repetition of what was published some years ago, in the 'Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists Compared'. I do not find the author adds anything new, unless we may bestow that epithet on a sermon annexed to his address, which, I presume, will do neither good or harm.

Last month you publicly attacked the people called Methodists, without fear or wit, you charged them with 'madness, enthusiasm, self-contradiction, imposture', and what not. I considered each charge, and ^{as} I conceive, refuted it, to the satisfaction of all indifferent persons.

Wesley's Journal-May 6, 1760 to Oct. 28, 1762

Be as unwilling as you will, through learned wisdom, or Fear of Enthusiasm, to believe this, your unbelief can last no longer, than till Adam's Flesh and Blood leave you.

Law: Letter of Clergyman in North of England-Wks IX.

1761-Therefore to turn to Christ as a Light within us, to expect Life from nothing but his holy Birth raised within us, to give ourselves up wholly and solely to the immediate and continual Influx and Operation of his Holy Spirit, depending wholly upon it for every Kind and Degree of Goodness and Holiness that we want, or can receive, is and can be nothing else, but proud, rank Enthusiasm.

Now as infinitely absurd as this conclusion is, no one that condemns continual, immediate Inspiration as gross Enthusiasm, can possibly do it with less absurdity, or show himself a wiser man, or better Reasoner, than he that concludes that Because without Christ we can do nothing, therefore we ought not to believe, expect,

wait for, and depend upon his continual immediate operation in every Thing that we do, or would do well.---As to pride charged upon this pretended Enthusiasm, it is the same absurdity.⁽¹⁾

If the belief of the necessity and certainty of immediate continual Divine Inspiration, in and for everything that can be holy and good in us, be(as its Accusers say)rank Enthusiasm, then He is the only sober orthodox Christian, who of many a good thought and Action that proceeds from him, frankly says, in order to avoid Enthusiasm, My own Power, and not Christ's Spirit living and breathing in me, has done this for me.⁽²⁾

If to believe that nothing godly can be alive in us, but what has all its Life from the Spirit of God living and breathing in us, if to look solely to it, and depend wholly upon it, both for the Beginning and Growth of every Thought and Desire that can be holy and good in us, be proud rank Enthusiasm, then it must be the same Enthusiasm to own but one God.⁽³⁾

The natural or unregenerate man, educated in pagan Learning and Scholastic Theology, seeing the strength of his Genius in the Search after Knowledge, how easily and learnedly he can talk, and write, criticise and determine upon all Scripture Words and Facts, looks at all this as a full Proof of his own religious Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, and calls immediate Inspiration Enthusiasm.⁽⁴⁾

What a Blindness is it in the forementioned writers, to charge private Persons with Enthusiasm of holding the necessity, and Certainty of Continual immediate Inspiration.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Law-Humble, Earnest and Affectionate Address, Wks. IX. p. 11

(2) Ibid. p. 16

(3) Ibid. p. 17

(4) Ibid. p. 19

(5) Ibid. p. 27

What kinder Thing can I say of those churchmen who accuse me of Enthusiasm, than that which Christ said of his blind Crucifiers, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do'.

It is to no Purpose to object to all this, that these Kingdoms are overrun with Enthusiasts of all kinds, and that Moravians with their several Divisions, and Methodists of various kinds, everywhere acting in the wildest manner, under the Pretence of being called and led by the Spirit. Be it so, or not so, is a matter I meddle not with; not is the Doctrine I am upon in the least affected by it. For what an Argument would this be; 'Enthusiasts, of the present and former ages have made a bad use of the Doctrine of being led by the Spirit of God, Ergo, "he is enthusiastic or helps forward Enthusiasm, who preaches up the Doctrine" of being led by the Spirit of God'. Now, absurd as this is, was any of my Accusers as high in Genius, as bulky in Learning, as Colossus was in Statue, he would be at a loss to bring a stronger Argument than this, to prove me an Enthusiast or an Abettor of them.

But as I do not begin to doubt about the Necessity, the Truth, the Perfection of Gospel Religion, when told that whole Nations and Churches have, under a Pretence of Regard to it ^{and} for the Sake of it, done all the bad things that can be charged upon this or that leading Enthusiast, whether you call these bad Things, Schism, Perjury, Rebellion, Worldly Craft, and Hypocrisy, etc. ⁽¹⁾

Where Self or the Natural Man is become great in Religious Learning, then the greater the Scholar, the more firmly will he

(1) Law-Humble, Earnest and Affectionate Address, Wks. IX. pp. 28-29

be fixed in their Religion, whose God is their Belly. I write not to Reason, says the blessed Jacob Behmen; 'O Enthusiasm', says the Mouth of Learning.⁽¹⁾

What poor Divinity Knowledge comes from Great Scholars and great Readers, any be sufficiently seen from the ^{two} following judicious Quotations in a late Dissertation on Enthusiasm; the one is taken from Dr. Warburton's Sermons; the other from a Pastoral Letter to Mr. Stinstra, a Preacher among the Mennonists of Friesland.⁽²⁾

Well might St. Paul say, 'I have determined to know nothing among you but Christ, and him Crucified?-----And had it not been for this Determination, he had never known, what he then knew, when he said, 'The Life that I now live is not mine, but Christ's that liveth in me'.-----Now did the Apostle here overstretch the Matter? Was it a Spirit of Enthusiasm, and not of Christ living in him, that made this Declaration?⁽³⁾

In the present Church, the Tree of Life is hissed at as the visionary food of deluded Enthusiasts.⁽⁴⁾

If any awakened Souls are here or there found among Christians, who think that more must be known of God, of Christ and the Powers of the World to come, than every Scholar can know by reading the Letter of Scripture, immediately the Cry of Enthusiasm, whether they be Priests, or People, is sent after them.⁽⁵⁾

Say, now, out of Reverence to sound Literature, and Abhorrence of Enthusiasm that the Kingdom of God is not really and virtually

(1) Law-Humble, Earnest and Affectionate Address, Wks. IX. p. 32

(2) Ibid p. 36

(3) Ibid p. 43

(4) Ibid p. 51

(5) Ibid p. 62

within, that its heavenly Fire, Light and Spirit, are not, ought not to be born in a sober right-minded Follower of Christ, and then you have a good Disciple of Christ, as absolutely dead to the Kingdom of Heaven, as the Corpse that has nothing of the Fire, Spirit and Light of thisWorld in it, as dead to all the outward World round about it.

If logic, Learning and Criticism, are almost everywhere set in high Places, to pronounce and prove it to be mere Enthusiasm and spiritual frenzy, what wonder is it, if Folly of Doctrine, Wickedness of Life, Lusts of the Flesh, Profaneness of Spirit, Wantonness of Wit, Contempt of Goodness and Profession of Christianity, should all of them seem to have their full Establishment among us?⁽¹⁾

To have their Law of Ordinances, their Temple Pomp sunk into such a fulfilling Saviour as this, was such Enthusiastic Jargon to their Ears, as force their sober, rational Theology, to call Christ, Beelzebub, his Doctrine, Blasphemy.⁽²⁾

Take away all that from Christ which Christian Doctors call Enthusiasm, suppose him not to be an inward Birth, a new Life and Spirit within us.....and then you have that very outward Christ, and that very outward Kingdom, which the Carnal Jew dreamed of.

The sober-minded Christian Scholar has none of this Jewish Blindness, He only says of Christ, we will not have this Man to Reign In Us, and so keeps clear of such mystic Absurdity, as St. Paul fell into, when he enthusiastically ^{said} 'Yet not I, but Christ that liveth within me!⁽³⁾.

(1) Law-Humble, Earnest and Affectionate Address, Wks. IX p.71

(2) Ibid pp.72-73

(3) Ibid p.74

Say not then, that it is only the illiterate Enthusiast that condemns human learning in the Gospel Kingdom of God..... So that the private Person, charging human Learning with so much Mischief to the Church, is so far from being led by Enthusiasm, that he is led by all the Church-learning that is in the World.(1)

He who holds Christ to be the one, only Head, Heart, and Life of the Church, and that no Man can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost, passes with the learned of both these People(Protestant and Papist)for a brain-sick Enthusiast.(2)

Here now, let the Wisdom of this World be as Wise as ever it will, and from its learned Throne condemn all this as Enthusiasm.(3)

The sober Divine, who abhors the Pride of Enthusiasts, for the sake of Humility, says of himself and all men, we are poor, blind imperfect Creatures.(4)

The best Sons of such a Church, must be forced to plead such Imperfections in the Members of it, as must be when the old fallen human Nature is still alive. And alive it there must be, and its Life defended, where the being continually moved and led by the Spirit of God, is rejected as gross Enthusiasm.(5).

1762-There are many well attested cases in modern history(although we should agree that they have lost nothing of the marvellous in the telling)where enthusiasts, in the ecstacies, have talked very fluently in the learned language, of which they had a very imperfect knowledge in their sober intervals.

Warburton-Doctrine of Grace Bk.I,iii.

(1) Law-Humble, Earnest and Affectionate Address, Wks. IX, p. 76

(2) Ibid. p. 77

(3) Ibid. p. 89

(4) Ibid. p. 98

(5) Ibid p. 99

Enthusiasm which had just done much greater things, easily induced the Saracens to believe, that they saw what their Prophet so confidently objected to in their admiration, an all-perfect model of eloquence in the chapters of the Alcoran. And they believed so long till the book became in fact, what at first they had only fancied it, as real and substantial a pattern of eloquence as any whatsoever; a paradox, which many others that I have had the odd fortune to advance, will presently be seen to be only another name for Truth. But here in the North-West our Enthusiasm is neither so exalted, nor our habits so constant. We have neither the knack of persuading ourselves so readily, nor the humour of sticking to a fashion so obstinately.

Warburton-Doctrine of Grace, Bk. I, viii.

This Man (Savonarola) a genuine Fanatic, if ever there were any, had assumed the personage of a Prophet and inspired Preacher. A Character which he had long and successfully sustained; taken up amidst the distresses and distractions of his Country, and without doubt, occasioned by them. But, losing his credit in the New Revolutions of Italy, and being brought by his enemies to the Stake, he died, after having disavowed his pretensions, on the rack, ---he died, I say, sullen and silent, without any remaining symptom of his former Enthusiasm.

But it may be objected, "That there are instances where Enthusiasm alone hath kept men steady in the practice of that virtue which a certain fanatic turn of mind first recommended". Doubtless there have been many good people, who, either through the weakness of their reason, or the force of their more refined passions, have been hurried into fanatic fervours, which have supported

and confirmed them in their previous innocence of manners. But even here we have sufficient marks to distinguish these better sorts of Enthusiasts, from such of the first Christian Confessors, who were in the happy circumstance of being found innocent, when they were led into the practice of all virtue by the Holy Spirit; whose office, as we have said, consisted in this gracious combination to enlighten the understanding, and to rectify the will. Now, that genial splendour which conducted the first Christians into the knowledge of all truth, sufficiently disclosed the divine Inspiration of all righteousness. But we see none of that shining light ordained and employed to gild the good works of Grace, in the morals of innocent Enthusiasts. On the contrary, we often find a more than ordinary ignorance; and sometimes even an incapacity of making rational conclusions.

Ibid Bk.II, i.

The abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit on the rising Religion gave encouragement to Imposters to counterfeit, and a handle to Enthusiasts to mimic, all that was equivocal in its operations.

Ibid Bk.II, iii.

As the Popish and Protestant opinions, or Articles of faith, are very opposite to one another, the God of Truth (While Truth was supposed to constitute a principal part of Religion) could never be believed to have anything to do with the new birth, whether Popish or Protestant. Nothing then was left for those who had deserted Nature, but to ascribe both to Enthusiasm and Demonianism.

Ibid Bk.II vii.

Enthusiasts, hurried on by the fervours of an inflamed fancy, lose sight of a Christain land, and a believeing Magistrate; and have nothing before their eyes but a Country of Pagans and Idolaters, with the Princes of this World risen up to suppress, and persecute the Word of Life. Under these delusions, it is no wonder that they despise order, insult Government, and set their Rulers at defiance.

Ibid. Bk.II.ix.

One sure mark of the hypochondriac Spirit under a Fanatic ferment, is the readiness to dispense, and the rashness to fling about, the exterminating Judgments of God; and when and Enthusiast calls down fire from Heaven, the least of his concern is, his being heard.

Ibid. Bk.II, xi.

Enthusiasm, so indispensable a requisite in the successful leading of a sect, must always be accompanied with craft.

A meer cool-headed Projector, without any tincture of innate enthusiasm, can never succeed in his designs, because such a one can never exhibit those surprising freaks, which a heated imagination, working on a disordered, though, for this purpose, fitly framed temper of body, so speciously produces.

Hitherto to Mark delivered by St. James to judge of a pretended Missionary from Heaven, consider Him as urging his pretensions fairly and with good faith; though possibly in a fanatic or enthusiastic way.

A mere Enthusiast, who by virtue of this faculty(imagination) hath gone so far in his purpose as to raise the admiration, and to captivate the spirits, of the People, must here begin to fail, if he be without the other quality, sectarian Craft: For, his

fanaticism not being under the controul of his judgment, he will want the proper dexterity to apply the different views, tempers, and pursuits of the People, now inflamed and ready to become his Instruments, to the advancement of his Projects.

The sallies of his (Wesley's) Enthusiasm will be so corrected by his Cunning, as to strengthen and confirm his supernatural pretences; and the cold and slow advances of a too cautious policy will be warmed and pushed forward by the force of his Fanaticism.

An Enthusiast considers himself as an Instrument employed by Providence to attain some great End, for the sake of which he was sent out.

Now I desire to know, how any, but an enthusiast, could have a full persuasion, i.e. be persuaded, bona fide, that he might use guile to promote the glory of God? *

Enthusiasm is a kind of ebullition or critical ferment of the mind, which a vigorous mind sometimes works through, and by slow degrees is able to surmount. Hence the most successful Imposters, who have set out in all the blaze of Fanaticism, have completed their Schemes amidst the cool depths and stillness of Politics.

What shall we think, when we find him (Wesley) saying the worst of his Friends that his Enemies have said of him, as soon as ever he sees them presume to play over his own pranks in any other Name? If they follow not him, they are Fanatics and Enthusiasts, how like soever they be in all other things to their ghostly Pattern.-----"I was with two persons, who, I doubt, are properly

* Wesley concerning Ignatius Loyala, "I wonder any man should judge him to be an enthusiast. No! but he knew the people with whom he had to do. And setting out like Count Z. with a full persuasion that he might use Guile to promote the glory of God."

Enthusiasts. For first they think to attain the ends without the means, which is enthusiasm, properly so called; again, they think themselves inspired by God, and are not.

But false, imaginary inspiration is enthusiasm. That theirs is only imaginary inspiration appears hence, it contradicts the Law and the Testimony.⁽¹⁾ These are wise words: but what do they amount to? Only to this, that these two Persons would not take out their Patents of Inspiration from his office; and therefore, he has advertised them for Counterfeits. However, thus much we gain by them, that all modern pretences to Inspiration are, by acknowledgement to Mr. J. Wesley himself, to be tried by the Law and the Testimony. He cannot, then, surely, refuse to have his own pretensions tried before that Judicature to which we have appealed him.

He(Wesley)pronounces Sentence of Enthusiasm upon another; and tells us, wherefore, without any disguise.-----"Here I took leave of a poor, mad, original enthusiast, who had been scattering abroad lies in every quarter."⁽²⁾ By which we find that even in Mr. J. Wesley's own opinion, Fanaticism and Knavery are very near neighbors.

"I had much conversation with Mr. Simpson, an original Enthusiast.-----I desired him in the evening to give an exhortation. He did so, and spoke many good things, in a manner peculiar to himself. When he had done, I summed up what he had said, methodizing and explaining it. O what pity it is that this well-meaning man should ever speak without an interpreter",⁽²⁾ and that Mr. J. Wesley should not be he!

(1)Wesley's Journal- August 12, 1738 to November 1, 1739.

(2), (7)Wesley's Journal- October 27, 1743 to November 17, 1746.

In these two last passages, we are presented with two Original Enthusiasts. But how differently do we find them treated. The first is accused of doing the work of the Devil, of spreading lies of his Master; on which account his Master takes his leave of him; a gentle expression, to signify, the thrusting him out, head and shoulders, from the Society of Saints; The other likewise, whose original enthusiasm is made to consist only in want of method, or, to speak more properly, want of Methodism, is only lamented, as having the ill luck to speak without an Interpreter. That is, without having his doctrine regulated on the dictates of his Master. But the First set his Master at defiance: the Second spoke many good things, that is, he professed a doctrine agreeable to Mr. Wesley; indeed, in a manner peculiar to himself, that is, not on Mr. Wesley's Authority, but his own. Now, there were some hopes of Him; but none at all of the other.

Therefore though they are pronounced original Enthusiasts alike, yet we must distinguish and rate their Titles very differently. The First Original was of his original the Devil, a scatterer abroad of lies in every quarter; The second was worth recovering. His Original Enthusiasm was a foundation, like Original Sin, to rest upon it a Monument of Grace.

But the most genuine instance of enthusiasm, which, he tell us, he will give, and which, with the utmost reluctance, is the following. He preached at Tanfield-Leigh. "But so dead, senseless, unaffected a congregation have I scarce seen, except at Wickham. Whether Gospel or Law, or English or Greek, seemed all one to them".⁽¹⁾ Yet he spoke, he tells us, strong, rough words. But

(1) Wesley's Journal- September 3, 1741 to October 27, 1743.

why is want of sense put into this rough description of their unregenerate State? He owns, that numbers of the Godly were without any. And why would he elicit sense from these Gentiles, when, upon their conversion, they were finally to be deprived of it, in ecstasies and new births? However, as ungrateful as the soil appeared,-----"yet the seed sown, even there was not quite lost. For on Thursday morning, between four and five, John Brown, then of Tanfield-Leigh, was waked out of sleep by the voice that raiseth the dead; and ever since he has been full of love and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost".⁽¹⁾ But now see what comes of waking these sleepers. This same J---- B-----, who had received the Holy Ghost but at the latter end of November, became so freakish by the beginning of December, that he even forced Mr. Wesley (for the honour of Methodism itself) to pronounce him likewise a genuine enthusiast, and to throw aside this precious Saint, as flawed by over-baking amongst the useless rubbish of his shop.

"I was both surprised and grieved"-----here, Reader, thou mayest safely believe him----"at a genuine instance of Enthusiasm. J--- B----- of Tanfield-Leigh who had received a sense of the love of God, a few days before, came riding through the town, hallowing and shouting" (the inseparable symptoms of the new birth[(sic) "and driving all the People before him, telling them, God had told him he should be a king and should tread all his enemies under his feet".⁽²⁾

Now this being the only fruit of the seed sown in this place, had it not been better to have let these honest people alone? who appear amiable, even through the sarcastic abuse he so liberally

(1) Wesley's Journal- September 3, 1741 to October 27, 1743.

(2) Ibid.

pours on them.

"At Wickham, I spoke strong rough words; but I did not perceive that any regarded what was spoken. The People indeed were exceeding quiet, and the cold kept them from falling asleep; till, before two, I left them very well satisfied with the Preacher and with themselves.(1) And why should they not? Why is this poor satisfaction, in themselves, which they had so liberally expressed towards him, begrudged them? A reasonable man desires no more than that his friends be satisfied with him; he does not expect, nay, he would be sorry to find them dissatisfied with themselves. But such an equality of mind and measure, as in the good people of Wickham, is destructive of all the schemes of a Fanatic Leader; Who must find, or make a People desperate, and ready to hang themselves, before they can be prepared and rightly tempered for the sacred mold of Methodism.

"I praise God for this also. Is it Enthusiasm to see God in every Benefit which we receive?(2) Certainly it is not. The Enthusiasm consists in believing those benefits to be miraculously conferred by a change in the established^{of}/Nature. This is the Enthusiasm with which he is charged; and this charge almost every page of his Journals will support. But here, by the neatest address, he covertly insinuates(as a word to the wise)that he meant no more by his Miracles than the seeing of God in every benefit we receive.

Ibid. Bk.II, xii.

Now Revelation, deprived of its foundation, natural Religion, and of its best defense and ornament, human Reason, lies a scorn to Unbelievers, and a prey to Fanatics and Enthusiasts.

(1) Wesley's Journal September 3, 1741 to October 27, 1743.

(2) Ibid July 20, 1750 to October 28, 1754.

If the vital principle of Christianity be Faith, we necessarily conclude it to be such a Faith, as was formed and may be supported on the rules and principles of human Reason. A wild Indian, perhaps, might imagine the clock was animated by a Spirit; and an Enthusiast, still wilder than he may, for aught I know, conclude that Christianity rises only out of internal impulse.

The fervours of Enthusiasm soon rise into Madness, when unchecked by Reason.

Now his (Law's) poetical Enthusiasm has blazed itself out; and he comes again to himself.-----we know how the lucid intervals of a Fanatic are wont to be employed; generally in covering the Madness of the Hot fit with the most deliberate and unblushing falsehoods of the cold.

In all this ribaldry, the only chance he (Law) has of misleading illiterate and weak Mortals, is by the repeated insinuations, that all religious dissensions are owing to these Mischief-makers, Reason and Human Learning; and that, in their absence, there is a perfect accord in Religion. But this is the fancy of none but Bards or Enthusiasts: now the good man (Law) having worked up his enthusiasm into a poetical ferment (for as it has been said, that a Poet is an Enthusiast in jest, so, he shews us, that an Enthusiast may be a Poet in good earnest) he adorns that powerful reasoning with a string of as beauteous similes, in discredit of human Learning.

From what hath past, rash Divines might be apt to charge this holy man, so meek of Spirit, with Enthusiasm,-----with a brutal spite of Reason-----and with more than vandalic rage against human Learning. But they wrong him greatly.

Ibid. Bk. III, ii

The Redemption of Mankind by the death of Christ and the Sacrifice himself upon the Cross, togetherwith its consequent Doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone, were the great Gospel-principles on which Protestantism was founded, on the first general separation from the Church of Rome; by some, perhaps carried too far, in their zeal for setting it at mortal distance from the Popish Doctrine of Merits; the Puritanic Schism amongst us being made a pretence that the Church of England had not receded far enough from Rome. However, being Gospel-Principles, they were held to be the badge of true Protestantism by all; when the Puritans (first driven by Persecution from religious to civil Factions, and by these Factions heated, on both sides, into Enthusiasm) carried the doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone into a dangerous and impure Antinomianism; For it is the very Nature of Enthusiasm to run all its notions to extremes. The speculation was soon after reduced to practice, by means of that knavery which always mixes itself with Enthusiasm, when once the Fanatic becomes engaged in Politics.

Ibid Bk.III, iii.

There is 'gone abroad', says he, 'an ungoverned spirit of enthusiasm, propagated by knaves and embraced by fools'.....
 Sir, you may call me both a knave and a fool, but prove me one or the other if you can. 'Why, you are an enthusiast'. What do you mean by the term? 'A believer in Jesus Christ? An assertion of his equality with the Father, and of the entire Christian Revelation? Do you mean, one who maintains the antiquated doctrines of the New birth and justification by faith? Then I am an enthusiast!'

"The enthusiasm, which has lately gone abroad, is faith which

worketh by love. Doth this 'endanger government itself?'
 Just the reverse. Fearing God, it honours the King. It teaches all men to be subject to the higher powers; not for wrath but for conscience's sake.

Wesley's Journal-May 6, 1760 to Oct. 28, 1762.

I met, at noon, as usual, those who believed they are saved from sin, and warned them of enthusiasm which was breaking in by means of two or three weak though good men, who, from a misconstrued text in the Revelation, inferred that they should not die. x x

"We begin now to meet with opposition from every quarter. Some say, 'This is rank enthusiasm; others, that it is 'either a cheat or mere pride'; others that it is 'a new thing', and they can find no such thing in the Bible'. x x

I dislike something that has the appearance of enthusiasm; overvaluing feelings and inward impressions; mistaking the mere work of imagination for the voice of the Spirit; expecting the ends without the means; and undervaluing reason, knowledge and wisdom in general.

1762-In all this time, while they were mildly and tenderly treated, there were none of them headstrong or unadvisable; none that were wiser than their teachers; none who dreamed of being immortal or infallible, or incapable of temptation; in short, no whimsical or enthusiastic persons; all were calm and sober-minded.

Wesley's Journal-May 6, 1760 to Oct. 28-1762

And, first, "the military enthusiasm of the Barons is but of a piece with the Fanaticism of the Heroes".

Hurd-Letter iv- Chivalry and Romance.

The true Messiah is not rightly owned, the Christian Religion is

not truly known, nor its Benefits rightly sought, till the Soul is all Love, and Faith and Hunger, and Thirst, after this New Life, Birth, and real ^{Formation} ~~Formation~~ of Jesus Christ in it, till without Fear of Enthusiasm it seeks and expects all its Redemption from it. ✓ <

You are entered into Holy Orders in degenerate Times, where Trade and Traffic have seized upon all holy Things; and it ~~will~~ be easy for you, without Fear to swim along with the corrupt Stream, and to look upon him as an Enemy, or Enthusiast, that would save you from being lost in it. * < *

All that we see and know of the Kingdom of God now, must be by that same Light by which we shall see and know the Kingdom of God hereafter. God is an all-speaking, all-working, all-illuminating Essence, possessing the Depth, and bringing forth the Life of every Creature, according to its Nature. Our Life is out of this Divine Essence, and is itself a creaturely Similitude of it; and when we turn from all Impediments, this Divine Essence becomes as certainly the true Light of our Minds here, as it will be hereafter. This is not Enthusiasm, but the Words of Truth and Soberness; and it is the running away from Enthusiasm, that has made so many great Scholars as useless to the Church as tinkling Cymbals, and all Christendom a mere Babel of learned Confusion.

Law-Earrest and Serious Ans.to Dr.Trapp,Wks.VI

If anyone was accused of writing against the Christian Revelation he might answer with your Lordship, if this accusation be true, it must be so either with regard to God's Universal Visible Revelation in all the Canonical Books, or with Regard to his Universal Invisible Revelation whereby he speaks inwardly to all sincere

People, or with respect to some particular Part of his visible Revelation. Let all the World judge, whether if a Person so accused should make this Reply, it would not plainly appear, either that he was a downright Enthusiast, or a Crafty Dealer in Cant and Artificial Words.

Law-Third Letter to Bishop of Bangor, Wks. I.

My fragments of time I employed to reading and carefully considering, the lives of Magdalen de Pazzi, and some other eminent Romish saints. I could not but observe.....that what was really good in their tempers or lives was so deeply tinged with enthusiasm, that most readers would be far more likely to receive hurt than good from these accounts of them.

From Matt. XVIII, 3, I endeavoured to show those, who use the word without understanding it, what Christian simplicity properly is, and what it is not. It is not ignorance or folly; it is not enthusiasm or credulity.

The reproach of Christ I am willing to bear; but not the reproach of enthusiasm, if I can help it.

Wesley's Journal-Oct. 29, 1762 to May 25, 1765

1763-Enthusiasm, pride and great uncharitableness, appeared in many who once had much grace.

A few (very few compared to the whole number) first gave way to enthusiasm, then to pride, next to prejudice and offense, and at last separated from their brethren. But although this laid a huge stumbling-block in the way, still the work of God went on. Nor has it ceased to this day in any of its branches. God still convinces, justifies, sanctifies. We have lost only the dross, the enthusiasm, the prejudice and offence.

Ibid.

1764-I found nothing of self-conceit, stubbornness, impatience of contradiction or London enthusiasm among them.

Ibid.

An enthusiast to the discipline of the field.

Goldsmith-Hist.Eng.in Lett.

1766-I wrote a catalogue of the Society, now reduced from eight and twenty hundred to about two and twenty. Such is the fruit of George Bell's enthusiasm, and Thomas Maxfield's gratitude!

O what power less than almighty can convince a thorough-paced enthusiast.

Wesley's Journal-May 27, 1765 to May 18, 1768.

Towards the end he (Wesley) exalted his voice and acted very ugly enthusiasm.

Walpole-Lett. 10 Oct.

1766-7-Different religions have introduced prejudices, Enthusiasms, and Scepticisms.

Mrs. S. Pennington, Lett. III

1768-Blessed be God, though we set a hundred enthusiasts aside, we shall still be encompassed with a cloud of witnesses, who have testified, and do testify in life and in death, that perfection which I have taught these forty years!

Wesley's Journal-May 14, 1768 to Sept. 1, 1770.

1769-Hardly serious at first, he is now an enthusiast.

Junius Lett. XXXV.

1771-The true Enthusiasts, those who are really inspired by the grace and love of God.

Fletcher- 4th Check.

1772-Enthusiasm (makes us) imagine that we are the peculiar favorites of the divine being.

Priestly, Inst. Religion.

1775-Count Marsay was, doubtless, a pious man, but a thorough enthusiast; guided in all his steps, not by the written word, but by his own imagination, which he calls, "the spirit".

Wesley's Journal-Sept.13,1773 to Jan.2,1776

An absurd and enthusiastick contempt of interest.

Johnson- Tax. no Tyr.

1778-He(Mr.Marsay)was a man of uncommon understanding and greatly devoted to God; but he was a consummate enthusiast. Not the word of God, but his own imagination which he took for divine inspirations, were the sole rule both of his words and actions. Hence arose his marvellous instability taking such huge strides backward and forwards; hence his frequent darkness of soul; for when he departed from God's Word, God departed from him. Upon the whole, I do not know that ever I read a more dangerous writer; one who so wonderfully blends together truth and falsehood, solid piety and wild enthusiasm.

Wesley's Journal-Jan.1,1776 to Aug.8,1779.

1779-"Imposture and fanaticism still hang upon the skirts of religion. Weak minds were seduced by the delusions of a superstition, styled Methodism, raised upon the affectation of superior sanctity, and pretensions to divine illumination. Manythousand were infected with this enthusiasm, by the endeavours of a few obscure Preachers, such as Whitefield and the two Wesleys, who found means to lay the kingdom under contribution".(1)

"Imposture and fanaticism". Neither one nor the other had

(1) Dr.Smollet's History of England XV, pp.121-122.

any share in the late revival of scriptural religion, which is no other than the love of God and man, gratitude to our Creator, and good-will to our fellow creatures. Is this delusion and superstition? No; it is real wisdom; it is solid virtue. Does this fanaticism "hang upon the skirts of religion"? Nay, it is the very essence of it. Does the Doctor call this enthusiasm?⁽¹⁾ Why? Because he knows nothing about it? Who told him that those "obscure Preachers made pretensions to divine illumination?" How often has that silly calumny been refuted, to the satisfaction of all candid men.

Wesley's Journal-Jan.1,1776 to Aug.8,1779.

1779-81-He(Cowley)was the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode and the gaiety of the less.
Johnson,L.P.,Cowley Wks.II.p.70.

1782-The enthusiastical admirers of a favorite author.
V. Knox, Ess. cxviii, I.

1784-Ye devotees of your adored employ,

Enthusiasts, drunk with an unreal joy

.Love makes the music of the blest above.

No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest

'Till half mankind were, like himself possess'd.

Cowper- The Progress of Error.

Where dwell these matchless saints--old Curio cries -
E'en at your side, Sir, and before your eyes,
The favour'd few--the enthusiast you despise

Cowper- Truth.

1786-Their military and enthusiastic spirit.

Burke- W. Hastings.

(1) Last mention of "enthusiasm" in Wesley's Journal.

Plants, of which she is enthusiastically fond.

Gilpin, W. in Mrs. Delany's Corr. Ser. II.

1790-In that most wise, sober, and considerate declaration (Declaration of Rights) drawn up ^{by} great lawyers and great statesmen, and not by warm and inexperienced enthusiasts. (1)

The old prerogative enthusiasts, it is true did speculate foolishly, and perhaps impiously, as if monarchy had more of a divine sanction than any other mode of government. (2)

It is no wonder therefore, that with these ideas of everything in their constitution and government at home, either in church or state, as illegitimate and usurped, or at best as a vain mockery, they look abroad with an eager and passionate enthusiasm. (3)

His enthusiasm kindles as he admires; and when he arrives at his peroration it is in a full blaze. (4)

Is this a triumph to be consecrated at altars? to be commemorated with grateful thanksgiving? to be offered to the divine humanity with fervent prayers and enthusiastic ejaculation? (5)

The animating cry which called "for all the Bishops to be hanged on the lamp posts", might well have brought forth a burst of enthusiasm on the foreseen consequences of this happy day. I allow to so much enthusiasm some little deviation from prudence. (6)

Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom. (7)

(1) Burke, Fr. Revolution-p.290

(2) Ibid. p.300

(3) Ibid. p.331

(4) Ibid. p.338.

(5) Ibid. p. 344

(6) Ibid. p. 345

(7) Ibid. p. 348

When manners, when modes of life, when indeed the whole order of human affairs, has undergone a total revolution; we shall be those reformers then to be honest enthusiasts, not, as now we think them, cheats and deceivers, when we see them throwing their own goods into common, and submitting their own persons to the austere discipline of the early church.⁽¹⁾

These enthusiasts do not scruple to avow their opinion, that a state can subsist without any religion better than with one.⁽²⁾

These institutions are the products of enthusiasm; they are the instruments of wisdom.⁽³⁾

Superstition is the religion of feeble minds; and they must be tolerated in an intermixture of it, in some trifling or some enthusiastic shape or other, else you will deprive weak minds of a resource found necessary to the strongest.⁽⁴⁾

If, in the contention between fond attachment and fierce antipathy concerning things in their Nature not made to produce such heats, a prudent man were obliged to make a choice of what errors and excesses of enthusiasm he would condemn or bear, perhaps he would think the superstition which builds, to be more tolerable than that which demolishes.⁽⁵⁾

Eager enthusiasm and cheating hope have all the wide field of imagination in which they may expatiate with little or no opposition.⁽⁶⁾

Their confederations, their spectacles, their civic feats, and their enthusiasm, I take no notice of.⁽⁷⁾

All these together unquestionably could not support the structure which the public enthusiasm, not he (Law) chose to build upon these bases.⁽⁸⁾

(1) Burke-Fr. Revolution p.376; (2)p.419; (3)p.428; (4)p.429; (5)p.430; (6)p.438; (7)p.460; (8)p.511.

I am a perfect enthusiast in my admiration of Nature in all her various forms; and I have looked upon, and as it were, conversed with the objects which this country has presented to my view so long, and with such increasing pleasure, that the idea of parting from them oppresses me with a sadness similar to what I have always felt in quitting a beloved friend.

Wordsworth, Lett. Dorothy Wordsworth-Keswil.,
Sept. 1790.

1791-His (John Wesley's) zeal was not a transient blaze, but a steady and constant flame. The ardour of his spirit was neither dampened by difficulty nor subdued by age. This was ascribed by himself to the power of divine grace; by the world, to enthusiasm. Be it what it will, it is what Philosophers must envy, and infidels respect; it is that which gives energy to the soul, and without which there can be no greatness or heroism.

Why should we condemn that in religion, which we applaud in every other profession and pursuit? He had a vigour and elevation of mind which nothing but the belief of the divine favour and presence could inspire.

Woodfall's Diary, London-1791.

A style glowing, animated, enthusiastic.

Burke-Lett. Member Nat. Assemb.

At present the king.....can send none but the enthusiasts of the system.

Burke- The Fr. Affairs.

1792-A passion for glory, which was nothing short of enthusiasm.

Anec. W. Pitt.

1793-There are many who have been so enthusiastically enraptured by what they conceived to be the infinite love of God to man, in making a sacrifice of himself that the vehemence of the idea has

forbidden and deterred them from examining into the absurdity and profaneness of the story.

Paine- Age of Reason, Part I.

The English will be wound up to a pitch of enthusiastic horror against France.

Gouv.Morris in Sparks Life and Wit.

Paracelsus.....an astrological enthusiast.

Holcroft tr.Lavater's Physiogn.VIII

1794-They who are unacquainted with enthusiasm which true genius inspires, will hardly conceive the possibility of that intense application, with which Mr.Warburton pursued his studies in that retirement.

They(George Whitefield and John Wesley)were both of them, it may be, frank enthusiasts at setting out. The former is said to have been weak, the latter was unquestionably a shrewd man.

Hurd-Life of Warburton,Warburton's Wks.
Lond.1811, I.

1799-Everything was calculated to soothe and subdue the mind, to inspire a grand and expansive tranquillity. The enthusiasm it spoke, occupied every channel of my heart.

Her mind was clear, her intellectual powers were complete and entireThe enthusiasm with which she now expressed herself was not of that inconsiderate nature, which should tend to make them feel with

_/greater acuteness the loss they were about to sustain.

Godwin- St. Leon.

1804-I labor day and night; I behold the soft affections

Condense beneath my hammer into forms of cruelty,

But still I labor in hope, though still my tears flow down,
That he who will not defend Truth may be compelled to defend

A Lie, that he may be snared, and caught, and snared and taken,
That enthusiasm and life may not cease.

Blake-Prophetic Books, Wks.ed.Yeats p.205.

Enthusiasm in its widest sense is any feeling'which, when raised to a ruling Degree of Life, kindles the Will, Imagination, and Desires, with Shadows, Fictions or Realities, with Things carnal or spiritual, temporal or eternal!', and 'it must be of as many kinds as those objects are which can kindle and inflame'.

The dominant idea in enthusiasm in a narrower sense, as it was used in the eighteenth century was the religious idea. For, beginning with 1700 religious enthusiasm, a "full but false persuasion in arman that he is inspired", began to be used in this technical sense and retained this meaning throughout the century. Polemical tracts, sermons, satires oppose this frenzy, this madness during the entire period. Yet, a change from a hostile to a tolerant attitude can be noted, until in the last ten years of the century with the vindication of Methodism, which was really an admission of the right of the individual to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, enthusiasm was admitted as emanating from divine inspiration,--a legitimate form of true religion.

The idea of enthusiasm in literature comes through an extension of meaning from religion to literature. Literary enthusiasm is a term much more difficult to define, because it is more subtle, because it has not so distinct a technical meaning in literature, as it has in religion, and because its manifestations do not excite so much opposition as religious enthusiasm. Beginning, however, with 1740 enthusiasm as applied to literature as nearly as it can be defined is⁴ that extraordinary emotion in poetry which makes it seem to us that we behold those feelings which the poet

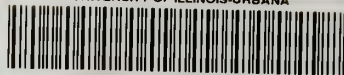
paints; that spirit especially which excites wonder and admiration in the various manifestations of wild, uncultivated Nature. It first shows itself in Joseph Warton's poem, "The Enthusiast, or the Lover of Nature", which starts a school, that descending through Young, Gray, Collins, Thomson, Chatterton, Godwin and the other early romanticists with ever increasing momentum culminates in the romantic movement which produces Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and Byron.

Without religious enthusiasm, however, literary enthusiasm would have been of very slow growth, if of any growth at all. It comes as a direct outgrowth of religious enthusiasm and is a natural result of the re-action against conformity and rationalism in literature, as religious enthusiasm is a natural result of the re-action against rationalism and conformity in the church. Yet once the spirit of enthusiasm in literature is brought in, it gains headway rapidly and runs parallel with the spirit in religion, and though religious enthusiasm in its exaggerated form wanes, literary enthusiasm increases in force, until enthusiasm, which, "true genius inspires", is recognized by men who earlier had denied that there was such a spirit applicable to literature; until it, too, passes into an exaggerated form, into real ecstasy in Blake. The rise of literary enthusiasm is, therefore, the rise of romanticism. Its growth could not, however, have been brought about without religious enthusiasm, for literature alone could not have freed itself from the traditions which encompassed it. Literary material capable of being made enthusiastic was at hand during the whole century; it needed the spark of religious enthusiasm to ignite it.





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